HER MAJESTY'S TOWER

BY

HEPWORTH DIXON

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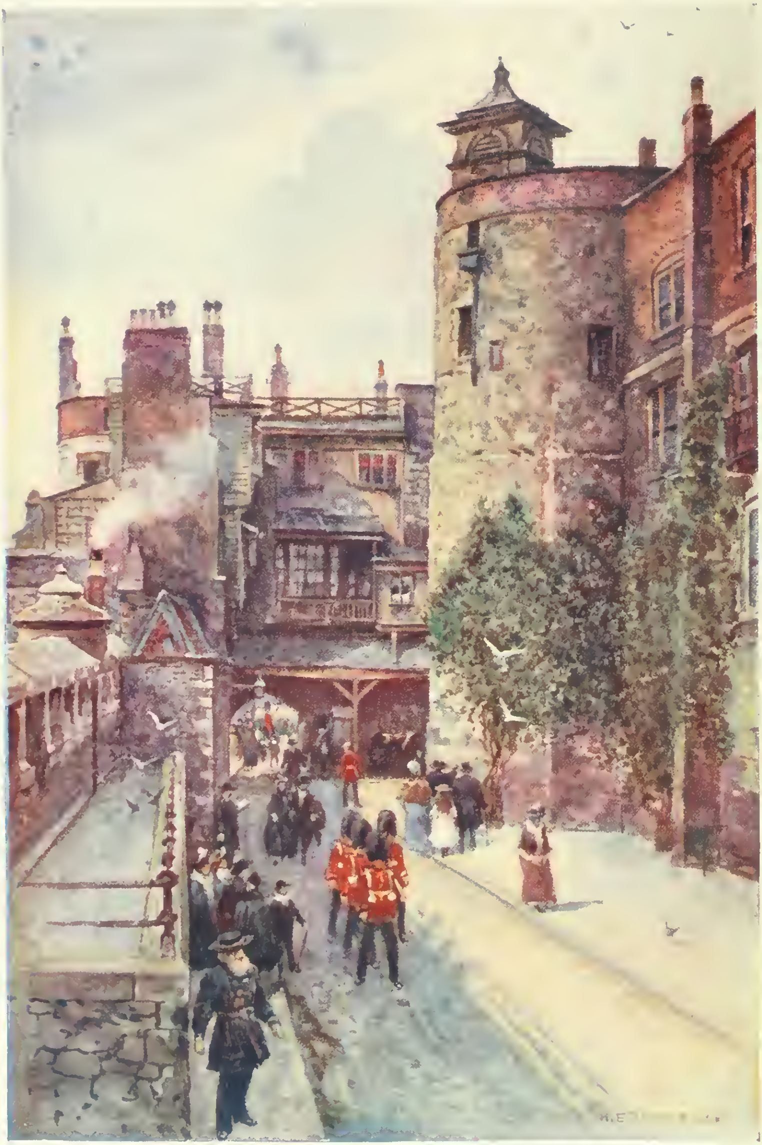
Alice H. Burford



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THE BELL TOWER, TOWER OF LONDON.

Her Majesty's Tower

BY

WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON

Popular Edition

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE REV. W. J. LOFTIE, B.A., F.S.A.
Author of "The Authorised Guide to the Tower," etc. etc.

INCLUDING SIXTEEN COLOURED PLATES AND A PLAN

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

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1901
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LA BELLE SAUVAGE

TO

QUEEN VICTORIA

THESE STUDIES IN

HER MAJESTY'S TOWER

WERE

DEDICATED

BY

EXPRESS PERMISSION.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE POPULAR EDITION.

THE author of this work on what we have so long thought of as Her Majesty's Tower deserves well of the present generation. His memory should be honoured by all to whom historical truth is sacred. The actual scene of a great event impresses its meaning and its relative importance more powerfully on the mind than any amount of eloquence or poetry or topographical description. It is largely due to the exertions made more than thirty years ago by Hepworth Dixon that a visit to the Tower is within the reach of every one in London; and, moreover, that an intelligible recollection may be carried away. Not only is the number of visitors enormously increased, but it is possible that, year by year, many who came only "to see the lions" go away having learnt something, and, at least, having been afforded an opportunity of realising how heavy was the price which our ancestors paid for the liberty we enjoy. Very early in a life wholly made up of toil, Hepworth Dixon resolved to expound, to all who would listen, the petrified history preserved in these old walls; and, in addition, to persuade the authorities to reform the abuses of arrangement which tended more and more every day to render a visit useless. In 1869, when the first edition of this book was published, the ordinary round was apparently designed to puzzle any one who wanted to know too much. It was difficult to bring away a distinct idea as to the general plan of the buildings, and still more to understand the exact position of the various apartments of the Keep. The rural sightseer, a man perhaps with a clear eye for a hunting country, was at fault here. The soldier, conversant with all manner of strategical devices, was completely deceived. The citizen, to whom the most complicated system of lanes and alleys could cause no delay, lost his clue in the White Tower, for Gundulf himself, who built it, could not have recognised the crypt of the chapel in Queen Elizabeth's Armoury, or the Council Chamber of the Conqueror among trophies of flint locks and stacks of musket barrels.

Another thing by which much doubt was caused was a spirit of falsification which seized upon the minds of those responsible for the preservation of the Tower. To this we must attribute the rebuilding, to an imaginary design, of the courtyard front of the Beauchamp Tower; and still more the assembly in one of all the inscriptions left by prisoners on the walls of the various chambers. These carvings, so significant, so touching, where they were made, lost their own meaning and lessened the value of those already in the room to which they were transferred. At this time, too, or soon after, the Wakefield Tower, the only relic, with the Keep itself, of Norman work, received its great Northumbrian windows, and every vestige of the long residence and death of Henry VI. was obliterated. Then, too, the few ruins left of the palace in which Anne Boleyn spent her last days, and of the hall in which she was tried and condemned, having been removed, the historic Lieutenant's Lodgings were renamed, and helped to mystify the visitor as "The Queen's House." Even the old church of the parish or precinct, St. Peter *ad Vincula*, did not escape, and was newly labelled the Chapel Royal, while the true royal chapel, St. John, in the White Tower, was handed over to a dissenting congregation. Some of these anomalies have been put right; but too many remain, for it is always difficult to rectify the errors of even a moderate "restoration." I do not include among them the new guard rooms, which have taken the place of a stucco building on the site of the Norman Coldharbour Tower. The new red brick is handsome, is no imitation or falsification, and will, quite soon enough, assume the dingy hue of its surroundings.

A correspondence in the daily papers was begun and carried on very soon after the publication of "Her Majesty's Tower." Hepworth Dixon was joined, and his efforts were recognised, by many well-wishers of all classes. He continued them at intervals until a general assent on the part of most people concerned was obtained as to certain points. It was agreed that the facilities of admission should be increased. When, as at Westminster Abbey, a free day in every week was granted, it was taken as a boon by thousands to whom even the smallest payments were prohibitory; and Dixon himself, having, by Mr. Disraeli's help, obtained leave, took parties of working men over the scenes of the events described in this book.

Another complaint had reference to the guides. Some were considered deficient in education or information, or both. Time and a different arrangement, by which the Beefeaters no longer take charge of parties, but are stationed where they can answer questions, have remedied this grievance, which is further met by the labels attached to every building and every object of importance. This labelling emphasized a third cause of complaint. Many of the chambers had been wrongly named, many of the objects had been wrongly described by the warders, and, most important of all, many learned visitors cast doubts, often with reason, on the names assigned to certain things exhibited as authentic. Finally, Mr. Dixon and those who thought with him objected to the arrangement of the round prescribed to the sightseer. This routine was of considerable antiquity, and must have been settled while there was a possibility that prisoners and visitors might be brought face to face. While much of the Tower was occupied as Ordnance stores, much also, including the chapel, as a Record Office; and while the Mint occupied the quarters still called Mint Street and Irish Mint Street, it is manifest that the strictest regulations had to be laid down and enforced; but by 1879 large reforms had been carried out. There were no prisoners. The Records had departed to Fetter Lane. The Mint had migrated to Tower Hill. But, so far, little attempt had been made to render the Tower more of an educational institution and less of a mere raree show. In December of that year William Hepworth Dixon died, at the age of fifty-eight, but the improvement he had lived long enough to see went steadily on.

It may be interesting to trace the stages by which the Tower as a show came to be proverbial. That it should be shown at all is in itself a fact worth mentioning, and probably grew out of the existence, in one of the buildings of the outer ward, of a menagerie for the maintenance and exhibition of the royal collection of exotic animals. The Lions' Tower was close to the entrance of the precincts at the Conning Tower, a wooden outwork on the site of the present gate. A narrow passage, by no means direct, led from the Conning Tower, first to the Lions' Tower and then to the arched gateway in St. Martin's, or the Middle Tower. It was thus possible to "see the lions" without even reaching the drawbridge which led into the outer ward. In quiet times, no doubt, visitors were admitted within the Curtain Wall. It was in the space between the Curtain and the ramparts of the Inner Ward that the Royal Mints were situated, and many officials and workmen must have constantly passed and repassed the drawbridge on a busy day before 1810, at which date the Mint and its workshops were transferred to Tower Hill. Along the same narrow road, past St. Thomas's Tower and the Traitors' Gate on the right, past the Garden Tower, which since the death in it of Northumberland in 1585 (i. 195) has been known as the Bloody Tower, on the left, passengers of all kinds must for ages have gone in and out to the storehouses which gradually occupied all the space once covered by the buildings and garden of the palace.

As time went on other objects attracted visitors. The buildings—barbarous, gloomy and "gothique"—did not interest any one, but the jewels, largely renewed and added to at the public expense, supplemented by munificent gifts, were shown to properly accredited visitors from the time of the coronation of Charles II. The royal collections of armour from Greenwich and other palaces, which had been dispersed by the Commonwealth, were assembled here about the same time, and were visited and admired by many foreign princes and ambassadors. They were shown in the building which then abutted on the White Tower, and the complete suits in an armoury close by, built for them by Wren. In the reign of William and Mary the Small Armoury, a large building on the site of the Waterloo Barracks, was opened by the king and queen in great state, and the stores were much admired by crowds of visitors, having been arranged in "a wilderness of arms" by Harris, a gunsmith, who also decorated some rooms at Hampton Court with his crowns, pyramids, globes and columns of the Corinthian order, all "composed of pistols," blunderbusses, flint locks, sabres and other weapons. These wonders, together with the crown imperial, the golden salt and the font, and many diamonds, rubies, and other jewels, at that time in the Brick Tower at the north-eastern corner of the Inner Ward, vied with the menagerie to make "seeing the lions" a very pleasant, if perhaps a rather expensive entertainment. No doubt, as it became better known and as it was less often interrupted by periods during which the Tower was in a state of siege, the showmen did not disparage the interest of the collections. We have an excellent and probably accurate account of what it had grown into about the time of the accession of George III. in Dodsley's "London and its Environs."

He tells us much about the wild beasts, the lionesses and their cubs; "three most beautiful tygers"; an eagle, "a noble bird that has been kept here above ninety years"; a leopard of "a shining yellow, finely interspersed with bright spots," and, above all, "an horned owl, which is a very surprising bird," and is described at great length. The charge for seeing the animals was sixpence. The rest of the Tower was apparently only shown by special arrangement. The Mint, we are told, "comprehends near one-third of the Tower." The White Tower is next described. It consists of "three very lofty stories, under which are spacious and commodious vaults, chiefly filled with saltpetre." There were evidently but few chambers open to the visitor, and the chapel is not mentioned. Small arms for the sea service, "closets and presses, all filled with warlike engines and instruments of death"; and in "a little room called Julius Cæsar's chapel are deposited some records." In the south-west angle was the Spanish Armoury, containing "the spoils of what was vainly called the Invincible Armada," including a banner with a crucifix upon it, which was specially blessed by the Pope, who, we read, had come to the water side for the purpose. An inlaid German wooden saddle, of the sixteenth century, decorated with the labours of Hercules, in ivory, still in the collection, is described as the Spanish general's shield, and the date is misread as 1379. The New, or Small Armoury, already mentioned, is next visited, and after a survey of the great guns, the Horse Armoury is reached.

As I have said already, Sir Christopher Wren built the gallery for this collection, and we still see it just to the south of the officers' quarters, a little to the east of the White Tower. We need not follow Dodsley through the long detail of what was to be seen in this plain but picturesque building, now diverted to other uses. The armour was almost all wrongly attributed, but many of the attributions survived until 1843, or longer; nor were they all corrected until the whole of the ancient armour was taken in hand by Viscount Dillon, P.S.A., half a century later still, when some very old legends were swept away. With one more quotation, then, we may dismiss Dodsley. Among the objects in the Spanish Armoury he saw "the ax with which Queen Anne Bullen, the mother of Queen Elizabeth, was beheaded, on the 19th of May, 1536. The Earl of Essex, Queen Elizabeth's favourite, was also beheaded with the same ax." This strange tale was much enhanced in interest by the subsequent discovery, in a wood cellar under the Devereux Tower, of a block, which, if it was a heading and not a mere faggot-cutter's block, as is more probable, may have been that made in the Tower and lent to the Sheriff of Middlesex for the decapitation of an unwieldy convict, Lord Lovat. It was shown with the axe in, and long after, 1843. I well remember at my first visit to the Tower in that year having been privileged to lay my head where Anne Boleyn had laid hers. The warder forgot to mention that the hapless queen was beheaded with a sword by a French headsman sent specially from Calais, and that no block was required.

The arrangements for showing the Tower were, on the whole, as described by Dodsley, simple and straightforward. The decorative arts, as practised by the gunsmith Harris, had not been applied to the chambers of the White Tower, and the Horse Armoury was still in the building prepared for it by Wren. A change had taken place by 1829. The so-called Spanish Armoury was transferred to the crypt under the chapel of St. John, and it was renamed from a figure of Queen Elizabeth on horseback which stood at one end. The jewels were still in the Martin or Brick Tower, but the Horse Armoury, removed from Wren's building, was placed in a long shed or gallery designed, we are told, by Mr. Wright, the clerk of the works, in 1826. This gallery was built against the south wall of the White Tower, and from its eastern end a staircase led up to an old window, through which the visitor was admitted to Queen Elizabeth's Armoury, in which also the (supposed) heading axe and block already mentioned were shown. The menagerie had dwindled to a few small animals, such as monkeys and parrots, with an elephant and a boa constrictor, and the lions had become extinct. In 1834 the last survivors were sent to the Zoological Gardens, then recently founded in the Regent's Park. The small arms still remained in the great storehouse. The records were still in St. John's Chapel. The moat was drained and the slopes were planted in 1843.

It is not possible to date all the changes and improvements which were one by one carried out before 1879, or to distinguish them from others which have taken place since. I chanced to make notes of two visits paid about that time, namely, in 1874 and again in 1880, the last a few months only after Hepworth Dixon's death. An improvement was to be seen almost everywhere, slow but progressive. The labelling of the figures in the Armoury had been greatly improved, especially in 1880. Much that had deceived Sir Samuel Meyrick in 1826 had been corrected by Hewitt, whose catalogue was printed in 1859. Planché had assisted in both arranging and labelling; but a great deal was still very misleading. Two warders, one with a party going in, the other with a party coming out, were to be heard speaking together. When we had duly mounted the wooden stair and entered a vaulted chamber in the White Tower, we had no idea that the vaulted chamber was the Crypt of the Chapel, or that we had entered it by a window.

While the warder told us how many mock pearls were used up in the embroidery of Queen Elizabeth's skirt, we could easily ascertain that the zigzag mouldings of an arch were modern and of wood. Had we known where we were, we might equally have corrected the name of "Little Ease," as applied to what may have been a priest's bedchamber. It was not very likely that prisoners were habitually lodged in a place so sacred, and it was absolutely certain that Sir Walter Raleigh was never there. When we had returned through the window and along the Armoury we entered the White Tower again by a passage said to have been made in the reign of Henry VIII. The place where the bones of Edward V. and his brother were found was duly pointed out, but we were not told that they were probably buried here because the wall is that of the sub-crypt and the place was reckoned holy ground. It occurred to one that if the warder must indulge his imagination, he might have added that no doubt the priest who slept in "Little Ease" selected this grave and kept the secret.

It was very evident that by degrees the old faults were being corrected. When anyone who remembers a visit to the Tower made in the year of the Great Exhibition, or even as lately as 1880, goes there now he finds every facility offered for forming a clear and truthful impression. We know where the palace stood, with its hall and its garden; the long lean-to shed which contained figures of medieval knights and kings, nearly all misnamed, has been swept away; we approach the Keep knowing where we are and where we can gain an entrance. Within we can trace the strange primitive arrangements of the vaulted Chapel and its Crypts, and of the timber-floored chambers adjoining it. The construction and meaning of the whole grim fortress, including the Crusoe-like arrangements for communication with the palace and the outer world, are no longer concealed. A few trophies of swords and guns, themselves part of the history of the place, remain; but when we ascend to the upper storey and see the royal chapel of the Conqueror and his family, and when we examine the armour of man and horse, so carefully and laboriously pieced together and identified, we feel that a good work has been begun and is being intelligently carried on in such wise as to convey a distinct, accurate and truthful idea to the mind of the visitor both of the precious objects here stored and of the history of the place in which we see them.

We cannot, of course, trace all this improvement to Hepworth Dixon, or to any one person or society. But undoubtedly "Her Majesty's Tower" was published at a time when everything shown was so thickly overlaid with fable that it conveyed a wholly false impression. To this fact, and to others of the kind, Dixon called public attention, and supplemented his book by keeping the questions he had raised before the public mind. The day of intentional falsification was over. As far as possible the old fortress, the palace, the prison, were to become a source of instruction and of pleasure to thousands.

The architecture as we may study it now is in itself a lesson. We may trace in these old walls relics of the dim Roman rule, a brick or two from the defences raised against the barbarians by the sons of Constantine. On the same site and with the same materials Alfred the Great a thousand years ago made a rampart which the Danes could never break. The trilateral castle of William the Norman, of which two features remain in the White Tower and the Wakefield, while the Coldharbour, though it survived

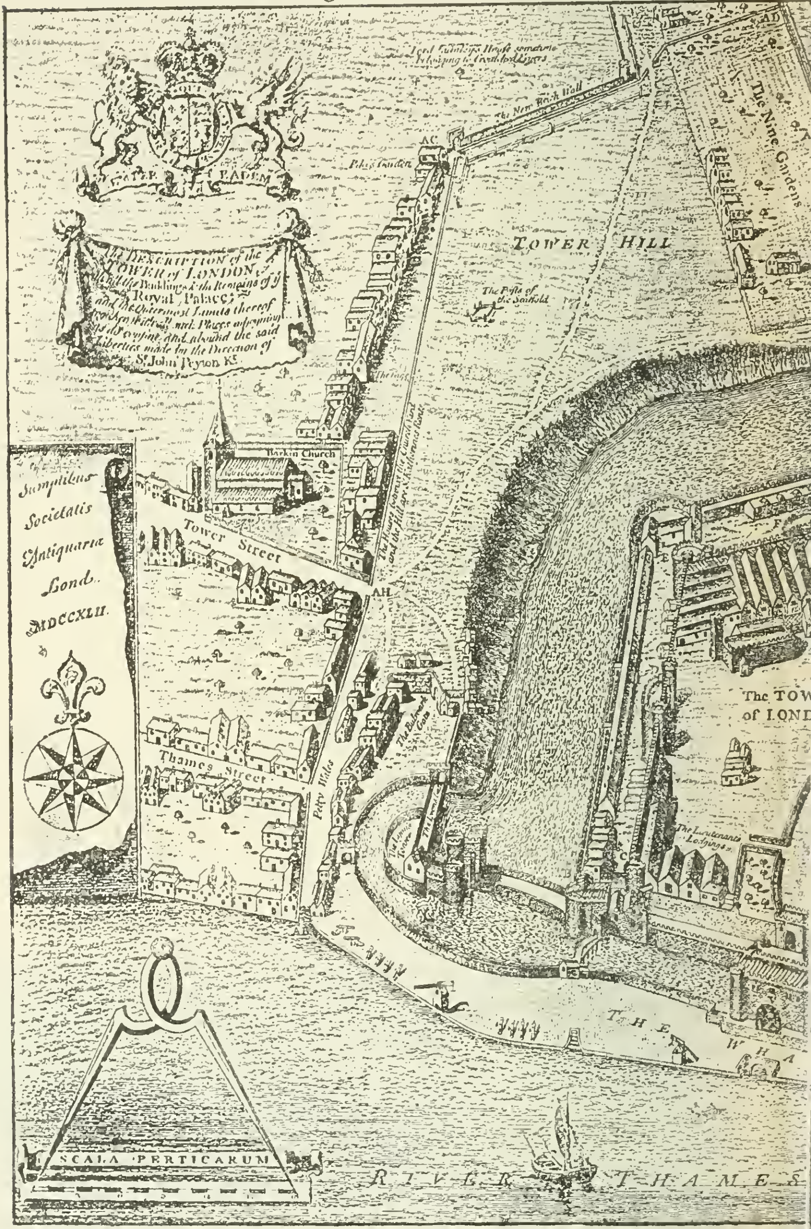
Cromwell, has long been replaced by modern buildings, shows us where and how features now venerable had their origin. The chapel of St. John survives as "the largest and most complete example of the Norman period now remaining in England." The fact that in the Keep, as designed by Bishop Gundulf, the entrance was many feet from the ground, and could only be reached by a wooden ladder from the other two towers, tells a tale now easily deciphered. It was not till the reign of Henry II. that domestic buildings were projected outside the defences of the triangle of heavy masonry. Henry III. first built and fitted up a royal palace, and made what was then an outer wall to contain it. The old parish church was thus enclosed, and some of the masonry of St. Peter's, restored after a fire during the early years of Henry VIII., may be of that period. The upper storey of the Wakefield was rebuilt about the same time, as an entrance to the great hall of the palace; and Hepworth Dixon usually and correctly calls it the Hall Tower. It was still further altered in late years, for the reception of the Crown jewels; and, in addition, an old bridge which had long spanned the roadway outside the curtain, was renewed when the officer in charge of the Regalia was lodged in the outer or St. Thomas of London's Tower, now better known as the Traitors' Gate. Edward III. strengthened the Curtain by building the Beauchamp, Salt, and Bowyer Towers; and in the reign of his grandson and of Henry VIII. the outermost batteries were planned. The names of Legge's Mount and Brass Mount point to their construction under the Stuarts. Sir Christopher Wren like all the antiquaries of his day, ascribed the Keep to the Romans; and we see on the leaden spouting the date 1709, when he put Roman heads upon nearly all the Norman windows, the first, but by no means the worst, example of what is now described by an old word with a new meaning, namely "restoration." Of Wren's better work we have the old armoury, already mentioned; and of the prevalence of the revived Gothic of "'tis sixty years since," we mark the Waterloo Barracks, the officers' quarters, the windows of the Jewel Room, the Beauchamp Tower, and the cottage-like house which stands adjoining the lieutenants' lodgings on the site of Sir Walter Raleigh's botanical garden. From this place, looking over the wall, he could see the people passing and repassing below in the middle ward, and could even speak to them.

There are few corners in the old fortifications which the careful visitor may not similarly associate with the scene of an interesting event.

For the Tower of London produces what can only be defined as a tangible impression. In spite of neglect, in spite of alteration, it is impossible to visit these gloomy precincts without feeling the reality of the scenes enacted here. They are not tales, or fables, or legends. Here on this rough pavement was actually poured out the last blood of the Angevins—the kings who had done so much for England from the days of Henry Plantagenet to those of the ill-starred son and daughter of murdered Clarence. This was their palace and their prison, and oftentimes their grave. We seem to meet them and their descendants at every corner. They look sadly from every old casement. And here, too, came others in the long struggle for liberty between kings and citizens. We remember how many burghers, who stood up for the rights of the people, passed in through these gates and passed out no more. We remember, too, how the Tower levelled all distinctions. On these cold stones by the portcullis sat the princess who was destined to become the greatest but one—that one to whom the author dedicated this book, and news of whose summons to a higher sphere comes to me as I write these lines —of England's queens. In one grave of St. Peter's Church, Monmouth and Jeffreys slept side by side. Here, too, are the churchmen, from Bishop Flambard, the first state prisoner, to Friar Randolph, who murdered the priest of St. Peter's; from Cranmer and Laud, the Archbishops, to the Jesuits and Seminarists and Old Catholics of the Popish Plot—every rank is represented. But a lodging in the Tower was apparently the heritage of certain families. The Mowbrays and Staffords and Arundels, under the Angevins, were succeeded by the Dudleys and Seymours and Howards under the Tudors, and they by the Wentworths and Devereuxes and Percies under the Stuarts. The palace has disappeared, but the green sward which marks its site tells us of the deposition of Richard II. and Henry VI., and of the high hopes of the kings and queens who started hence in procession through the old City to be crowned at Westminster. In short, the history of the Tower is the history of England in a concrete form; and Hepworth Dixon took care in the following pages to make the long narrative so interesting that no fiction can equal it.

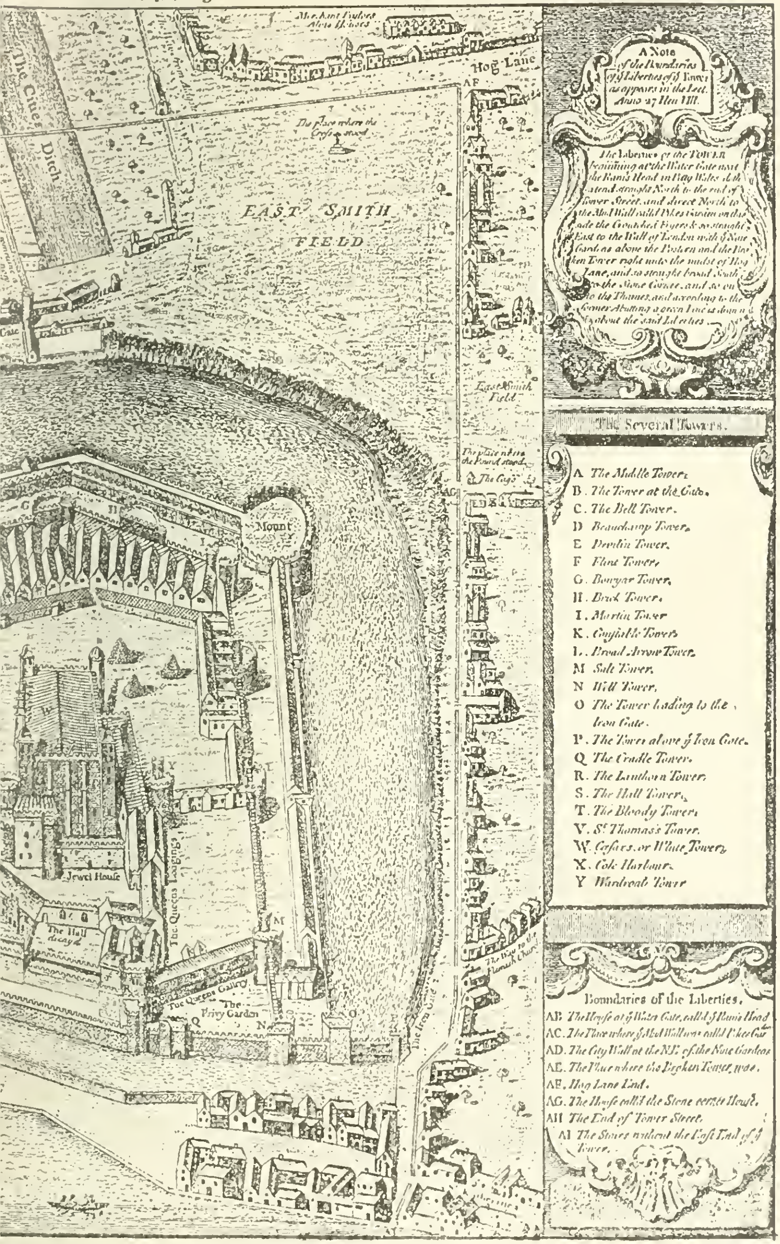
W. J. Loftie.

A True and Exact Draught of the TOWER LIBERTIES, ſurvey


The DESCRIPTION of the TOWER of LONDON
Royal Palace;
St John Peyton Kt
Sumptibus Societatis Antiquariæ Lond. MDCCXLII.
Barkin Church
Tower Street
Thames Street
Petty Wales
TOWER HILL
The Nine Gardens
The Posts of the Scaffold
The New Brick Wall
AC
AD
AH
The Bulwark Gate
The Lieutenants Lodgings
The TOW of LOND
SCALA PERTICARUM
RIVER THAMES
THE WHA

PLAN OF THE TOWER AN

n the Year 1597 by *GULIELMUS HAIWARD* and *J. GASCOYNE*.


Hog Lane
The Citie Ditch
The place where the Crosse stood
EAST SMITH FIELD
East Smith Field
The place where the Pound stood
The Cage
Mount
Jewel House
The Queens Lodgings
The Hall decayd
The Queens Gallery
The Privy Garden
The Way to the Flemish Church
The Iron Gate
A Note of the Boundaries of ye Liberties of ye Tower as appears in the Leet. Anno 27 Hen VIII.
The Liberties of the TOWER beginning at the Water Gate next the Ram's Head in Petty Wales doth extend straight North to the end of Tower Street, and direct North to the Mud Wall called Pikes Garden on the side the Crutched Fryers & so straight East to the Wall of London with ye Nun Garden above the Postern and the Broken Tower right unto the midst of Hog Lane, and so straight bound South to the Stone Corner, and so on to the Thames, and according to the Corner Abutting a green Line is drawn all about the said Liberties.
The Several Towers.
A. The Middle Tower.
B. The Tower at the Gate.
C. The Bell Tower.
D. Beauchamp Tower.
E. Devilin Tower.
F. Flint Tower.
G. Bowyar Tower.
H. Brick Tower.
I. Martin Tower.
K. Constable Tower.
L. Broad Arrow Tower.
M. Salt Tower.
N. Well Tower.
O. The Tower leading to the Iron Gate.
P. The Tower above ye Iron Gate.
Q. The Cradle Tower.
R. The Lanthorn Tower.
S. The Hall Tower.
T. The Bloody Tower.
V. St Thomas's Tower.
W. Caesars, or White Tower.
X. Cole Harbour.
Y. Wardrobe Tower
Boundaries of the Liberties.
AB. The House at ye Water Gate, called ye Rams Head
AC. The Place where ye Mud Wall was called Pikes Gar
AD. The City Wall at the NE of the Nun Gardens
AE. The Place where the Broken Tower was.
AF. Hog Lane End.
AG. The House called the Stone corner House.
AH. The End of Tower Street.
AI. The Stairs without the East End of ye Tower.

OWER LIBERTIES IN 1597.

HER MAJESTY'S TOWER.

CHAPTER I.

THE PILE.

HALF-A-MILE below London Bridge, on ground which was once a bluff, commanding the Thames from St. Saviour's Creek to St. Olave's Wharf, stands the group of buildings known in our common speech as the Tower of London, in official phrase as Her Majesty's Tower; a mass of ramparts, walls, and gates, the most ancient and most poetic pile in Europe.

Seen from the hill outside, the Tower appears to be white with age and wrinkled by remorse. The home of our stoutest kings, the grave of our noblest knights, the scene of our gayest revels, the field of our darkest crimes, that edifice speaks at once to the eye and to the soul. Grey keep, green tree, black gate, and frowning battlement, stand out, apart from all objects far and near them, menacing, picturesque, enchaining; working on the senses like a spell; and calling us away from our daily mood into a world of romance, like that which we find painted in light and shadow on Shakespeare's page, Looking at the Tower as either a prison, a palace, or a court, picture, poetry, and drama crowd upon the mind; and if the fancy dwells most frequently on the state prison, this is because the soul is more readily kindled by a human interest than fired by an archaic and official fact. For one man who would care to see the room in which a council met or a court was held, a hundred men would like to see the chamber in which Lady Jane Grey was lodged, the cell in which Sir Walter Raleigh wrote, the tower from which Sir John Oldcastle escaped. Who would not like to stand for a moment by those steps on which Anne Boleyn knelt; pause by that slit in the wall through which Arthur De la Pole gazed; and linger, if he could, in that room in which Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley searched the New Testament together?

The Tower has an attraction for us akin to that of the house in which we were born, the school in which we were trained. Go where we may, that grim old edifice on the Pool goes with us: a part of all we know and of all we are. Put seas between us and the Thames, this Tower will cling to us, like a thing of life. It colours Shakespeare's page. It casts a momentary gloom over Bacon's story. Many of our books were written in its vaults; the Duke of Orleans' "Poesies," Raleigh's "Historie of the World," Elliot's "Monarchy of Man," and Penn's "No Cross, no Crown."

Even as to length of days, the Tower has no rival among palaces and prisons; its origin, like that of the Iliad, that of the Sphinx, that of the Newton Stone, being lost in the nebulous ages, long before our definite history took shape. Old writers date it from the days of Cæsar; a legend taken up by Shakespeare and the poets, in favour of which the name of Cæsar's tower remains in popular use to this very day. A Roman wall can even yet be traced near some parts of the ditch. The Tower is mentioned in the Saxon Chronicle, and a

Saxon stronghold may have stood upon this spot. The buildings as we have them now in block and plan were commenced by William the Conqueror; and the series of apartments in Cæsar's tower—hall, gallery, council-chamber, chapel—were built in the early Norman reigns, and used as a royal residence by all our Norman kings. What can Europe show to compare against such a tale?

Set against the Tower of London—with its eight hundred years of historic life, its nineteen hundred years of traditional fame—all other palaces and prisons appear like things of an hour. The oldest bit of palace in Europe, that of the west front of the Burg in Vienna, is of the time of Henry the Third. The Kremlin in Moscow, the Doge's Palazzo in Venice, are of the fourteenth century. The Seraglio in Stamboul was built by Mohammed the Second. The oldest part of the Vatican was commenced by Borgia, whose name it bears. The old Louvre was commenced in the reign of Henry the Eighth; the Tuileries in that of Elizabeth. In the time of our Civil War Versailles was yet a swamp. The Escorial belongs to the seventeenth century; Sans Souci to the eighteenth. The Serail of Jerusalem is a Turkish edifice. The palaces of Athens, of Cairo, of Tehran, are all of modern date.

Neither can the prisons which remain in fact as well as in history and drama—with the one exception of St. Angelo in Rome—compare against the Tower. The Bastile is gone; the Bargello has become a museum; the Piombi are removed from the Doge's roof. Vincennes, Spandau, Spilberg, Magdeburg, are all modern in comparison with a jail from which Ralph Flambard escaped so long ago as the year 1100, the date of the first Crusade.

Standing on Tower Hill, looking down on the dark lines of wall—picking out keep and turret, bastion and ballium, chapel and belfry—the jewel-house, the armoury, the mounts, the casemates, the open leads—

the Bye-ward gate, the Belfry, the Bloody tower—the whole edifice seems alive with story; the story of a nation's highest splendour, its deepest misery, and its darkest shame. The soil beneath your feet is richer in blood than many a great battle-field; for out upon this sod has been poured, from generation to generation, a stream of the noblest life in our land. Should you have come to this spot alone, in the early day, when the Tower is noisy with martial doings, you may haply catch, in the hum which rises from the ditch and issues from the wall below you—broken by roll of drum, by blast of bugle, by tramp of soldiers—some echoes, as it were, of a far-off time: some hints of a May-day revel; of a state execution; of a royal entry. You may catch some sound which recalls the thrum of a queen's virginal, the cry of a victim on the rack, the laughter of a bridal feast. For all these sights and sounds—the dance of love and the dance of death—are part of that gay and tragic memory which clings around the Tower.

From the reign of Stephen down to that of Henry of Richmond, Cæsar's tower (the great Norman keep, now called the White tower) was a main part of the royal palace; and for that large interval of time, the story of the White tower is in some sort that of our English society as well as of our English kings. Here were kept the royal wardrobe and the royal jewels; and hither came with their goodly wares, the tiremen, the goldsmiths, the chasers and embroiderers, from Flanders, Italy, and Almaigne. Close by were the Mint, the lions' dens, the old archery-grounds, the Court of King's Bench, the Court of Common Pleas, the Queen's gardens, the royal banqueting-hall; so that art and trade, science and manners, literature and law, sport and politics, find themselves equally at home.

Two great architects designed the main parts of the Tower: Gundulf the Weeper and Henry the Builder; one a poor Norman monk, the other a great English king.

Gundulf, a Benedictine friar, had, for that age, seen a great deal of the world; for he had not only lived in Rouen and Caen, but had travelled in the East. Familiar with the glories of Saracenic art, no less than with the Norman simplicities of Bec, St. Ouen, and St. Etienne; a pupil of Lanfranc, a friend of Anselm; he had been employed in the monastery of Bec to marshal, with the eye of an artist, all the pictorial ceremonies of his church. But he was chiefly known in that convent as a weeper. No monk at Bec could cry so often and so much as Gundulf. He could weep with those who wept; nay, he could weep with those who sported; for his tears welled forth from what seemed to be an unfailing source.

As the price of his exile from Bec, Gundulf received the crosier of Rochester, in which city he rebuilt the cathedral, and perhaps designed the castle, since the great keep on the Medway has a sister's likeness to the great keep on the Thames. His works in London were—the White tower, the first St. Peter's church, and the old barbican, afterwards known as the Hall tower, and now used as the Jewel house.

The cost of these works was great; the discontent caused by them was sore. Ralph, Bishop of Durham, the able and rapacious minister who had to raise the money, was hated and reviled by the Commons with peculiar bitterness of heart and phrase. He was called Flambard, or Firebrand. He was represented as a devouring lion. Still the great edifice grew up; and Gundulf, who lived to the age of fourscore, saw his great keep completed from basement to battlement.

Henry the Third, a prince of epical fancies, as Corffe, Conway, Beaumaris, and many other fine poems in stone attest, not only spent much of his time in the Tower, but much of his money in adding to its strength and beauty. Adam de Lamburn was his master mason; but Henry was his own chief clerk of the works. The Water gate, the embanked wharf, the Cradle tower, the Lantern, which he made his bedroom and private closet, the Galleyman tower, and the first wall, appear to have been his gifts. But the prince who did so much for Westminster Abbey, not content with giving stone and piles to the home in which he dwelt, enriched the chambers with frescoes and sculpture, the chapels with carving and glass; making St. John's chapel in the White tower splendid with saints, St. Peter's church on the Tower Green musical with bells. In the Hall tower, from which a passage led through the Great hall into the King's bedroom in the Lantern, he built a tiny chapel for his private use—a chapel which served for the devotion of his successors until Henry the Sixth was stabbed to death before the cross. Sparing neither skill nor gold to make the great fortress worthy of his art, he sent to Purbeck for marble, and to Caen for stone. The dabs of lime, the spawls of flint, the layers of brick, which deface the walls and towers in too many places, are of either earlier or later times. The marble shafts, the noble groins, the delicate traceries, are Henry's work. Traitor's gate, one of the noblest arches in the world, was built by him; in short, nearly all that is purest in art is traceable to his reign.

Edward the First may be added, at a distance, to the list of builders. In his reign the original church of St. Peter fell into ruin; the wrecks were carted away, and the present edifice was built. The bill of costs for clearing the ground is still extant in Fetter Lane. Twelve men, who were paid twopence a day wages, were employed on the work for twenty days. The cost of pulling down the old chapel was forty-six shillings and eightpence; that of digging foundations for the new chapel forty shillings. That chapel has suffered from wardens and lieutenants; yet the shell is of very fine Norman work.

From the days of Henry the Builder down to those of Henry of Richmond, the Tower, as the strongest place in the south of England, was by turns the magnificent home and the miserable jail of all our princes. Here Richard the Second held his court, and gave up his crown. Here Henry the Sixth was murdered. Here the Duke of Clarence was drowned in wine. Here King Edward and the Duke of York were slain by command of Richard. Here Margaret of Salisbury was hacked into pieces on the block.

Henry of Richmond kept his royal state in the Tower, receiving his ambassadors, counting his angels, making presents to his bride, Elizabeth of York. Among other gifts to that lady on her nuptial day was a Royal Book of verse, composed by a prisoner in the keep.

CHAPTER II.

INNER WARD AND OUTER WARD.

THE Tower was divided into two main parts; an Inner Ward and an Outer Ward; the first part being bounded by the old wall, crowned by twelve mural towers; the second part being bounded by the soil which fringed the slopes leading down into the ditch. A man who would read aright the many curious passages in our history of which the State Prison is the scene, must bear this fact of the two wards constantly in his mind.

The Inner Ward, planned and partly built by the Monk of Bec, was the original fortress; of which the defending ditch lay under the ballium wall. It contained the keep, the royal galleries and rooms, the Mint, the Jewel house, the Wardrobe, the Queen's garden, St. Peter's church, the open green, the Constable's tower, the Brick tower, in which the Master of the Ordnance lived, the Great hall, quarters for the archers and bowmen, and, in later days, the Lieutenant's house. This ward was flanked and covered by twelve strong works, built on the wall, and forming part of it; the Beauchamp tower, the Belfry, the Garden tower (now famous as the Bloody tower), the Hall tower, the Lantern, the Salt tower, the Broad Arrow tower, the Constable tower, the Martin tower, the Brick tower, the Flint tower, the Bowyer tower, and the Develin tower; all of which may be considered, more or less, as defensive works; even the Lantern, which had a vault for prisoners on the ground, a royal bed-chamber on the main floor, a guard-room for archers and slingers in the upper story, and a round turret over these for the burning lights. Only one gateway pierced the wall; a narrow and embattled outlet near the Water gate, passing under the strong block house, now the Bloody tower, into Water Lane. The road springs upward by the main guard; a rise of one in ten; so as to give the men inside a vast advantage in a push of pikes.

This Inner Ward was the royal quarter.

The Outer Ward, which owed its plan and most of its execution to Henry the Third, lay between the ballium and the outer scarp of the ditch, with a protected passage into the Thames. It contained some lanes and streets below the wall, and works which overlooked the wharf. In this ward stood the Middle tower, the Bye-ward tower, the Water gate, the Cradle tower, the Well tower, the Galleyman tower, the Iron Gate tower, Brass Mount, Legge Mount, and the covered ways. Into it opened the Hall tower, afterwards called the Record tower, now known as the Jewel house. Close by the Hall tower stood the Great Hall, the doors of which opened into this outer court. Spanning the ditch, towards the Thames, stood the Water gate, a fine structure, built by Henry the Builder, which folk called St. Thomas's tower, after our Saxon saint. Under this building sprang the wide arch, through which the tides flowed in and out from the river and the ditch; the water-way known as Traitor's gate.

This Outer Ward was the folk's quarter.

To the Inner Ward, common folk had no right of access, and they were rarely allowed to enjoy as a privilege that which they could not claim as a right. This Inner Ward was the King's castle, his palace, his garrison, his wardrobe, his treasury. Here, under charge of a trusty officer, he kept the royal jewels, secreted from every eye, except on a coronation day. Here rose his keep, with the dungeons in which he could chain his foes. Here stood his private chapel, and not far from it his private block. No man ever dreamt of contesting the King's right to do what he pleased in this quarter; and thus, an execution within these lines was regarded by the world outside as little better than a private murder.

Into the Outer Ward, the Commons had always claimed a right of entry, and something more than a right of entry; that is to say, free access, guarded by possession of the outer gates and towers.

This right of entry was enforced on stated occasions, with an observance which is highly comic. Baron and citizen—that is to say, alderman and commoner—met in Barking Church, on Tower Hill, whence they sent six sage men of their body into the Tower to ask leave for a deputation of citizens to see the king, and free access for all people to the courts of law. These six sage persons were to beg that the king, according to custom, would forbid his guards either to close the gates or to keep watch over them, while the citizens were coming and going; it being wrong in itself and against their freedom, they alleged, for any one to keep guard over the gates and doors of the Tower, save such of their own people as they should appoint to that duty. On this request being granted by the king, the six messengers would return to their fellows in Barking Church, report what they had done, and send the citizen guard to their posts. Then would the Commons elect from their body three men of mature age, moderate opinions, and cautious speech, to act as presenters. The rules by which they acted were rather strict. The sheriffs and beadles were to be decently clothed and shod, since it was laid down that no man should come before the king either in dirty rags or without his shoes. Their followers were to be trim and spruce; their capes and cloaks laid aside; their coats and overcoats put on. No man was to go with them into the presence who had sore eyes; no man was to join them who had weak legs. Mayor, alderman, sheriff, crier, every one going into the Tower on public duty, was to have his hair cut short and his face newly shaved.

The object of these rules was to guard the right of access to the courts of justice; the Court of King's Bench, and the Court of Common Pleas.

Where were these courts of justice held?

No writer on the Tower has sought to find the true localities of these great tribunals. Yet the sites are clearly enough described in our ancient writs, hundreds of which may be found in Fetter Lane. One court stood in the royal quarter, another court stood in the folk's quarter. The King's Bench was held in a room which the writs describe as the Lesser Hall, lying under the east turret of the keep. The Common Pleas were held in a place which the writs describe as the Great hall by the river; a hall now gone, but of which the identification is quite as sure. It stood by the Hall tower, to which it lent a name, and into which it led.

A view of the Tower in the Royal Book of verse, shows that this Great Hall was a Gothic edifice, in the style of Henry the Third.

Many a dark scene in the history of our public liberties and our private manners grows suddenly luminous when we bear these facts in mind; that the Tower consisted of two parts—an inner court and an outer court; that the Court of King's Bench was held in the royal quarter, the Court of Common Pleas in the folk's quarter; that the people had free access to the outer court, and only to the outer court.

The Hall tower, in which Henry the Third had built a chapel for his private use, being an outer work, with doors and windows opening on the rampart and

Water Lane, could not be used as a prison for men of a dangerous class. A feeble prince, like Henry the Sixth, who shrank from state and power, may have enjoyed a mild detention in the hall now sparkling with the crown jewels; for he was softly kept; and this tower was in his day a part of the royal palace. Old traditions make this room his cage; the scene of his pious meditations; and of his deliberate murder by the Duke of Gloucester. After Henry's death, if not before, this tower was used as a paper office; for which purpose, as a hall adjoining the Court of Common Pleas, and opening into the folk's quarter, it was well adapted. Hence it came to be known as the Record tower.

On the wall above Water Lane, stood the two signal towers, the Belfry and the Lantern; each surmounted by a turret; of use to vessels coming up the Thames. On the first swung a bell; on the second burned a light.

CHAPTER III.

THE WHARF.

TURNING through a sally-port in the Bye-ward gate, you cross the south arm of the ditch, and come out on the Wharf; a strip of strand in front of the fortress, won from the river, and kept in its place by masonry and piles. This wharf, the work of Henry the Builder, is one of the wonders of his reign; for the whole strip of earth had to be seized from the Thames, and covered from the daily ravage of its tides. At this bend of the river the scour is hard, the roll enormous. Piles had to be driven into the mud and silt; rubble had to be thrown in between these piles; and then the whole mass united with fronts and bars of stone. All Adam de Lamburn's skill was taxed to resist the weight of water, yet keep the sluices open by which he fed the ditch. Most of all was this the case when the King began to build a new barbican athwart the sluice. This work, of which the proper name was for many ages the Water gate, commands the only outlet from the Tower into the Thames; spanning the ditch and sweeping the wharf, both to the left and right. So soon as the wharf was taken from the river-bed, this work became essential to the defensive line.

London folk felt none of the King's pride in the construction of this great wharf and barbican. In fact, these works were in the last degree unpopular, and on news of any mishap occurring to them the commons went almost mad with joy. Once they sent to the King a formal complaint against these works. Henry assured his people that the wharf and Water gate would not harm their city. Still the citizens felt sore. Then, on St. George's night (1240), while the people were at prayer, the Water gate and wall fell down, no man knew why. No doubt the tides were high that spring, and the soft silt of the river gave way beneath the wash. Anyhow they fell.

Henry, too great a builder to despair, began again; this time with a better plan; yet on the self-same night of the ensuing year his barbican crashed down into the river, one mass of stones. A monk of St. Alban's, who tells the tale, asserts that a priest who was passing near the fortress saw the spirit of an archbishop, dressed in his robes, holding a cross, and attended by the spirit of a clerk, gazing sternly on these new works. As the priest came up, the figure spake to the masons, "Why build ye these?" As he spoke, he struck the walls sharply with the holy cross, on which they reeled and sank into the river, leaving a wreath of smoke behind. The priest was too much scared to accost the more potent spirit; but he turned to the humble clerk, and asked him the archbishop's name. "St. Thomas the Martyr," said the shade. The priest, growing bolder, asked him why the martyr had done this deed? "St. Thomas," said the spirit, "by birth a citizen, mislikes these works, because they are raised in scorn, and against the public right. For this cause he has thrown them down beyond the tyrant's power to restore them."

But the shade was not strong enough to scare the King. Twelve thousand marks had been spent on that heap of ruins; yet the barbican being necessary to his wharf, the builder, on the morrow of his second mishap, was again at work, clearing away the rubbish, driving in the piles, and laying in a deeper bed the foundation stones. This time his work was done so well that the walls of his gateway have never shrunk, and are as firm to-day as the earth on which they stand.

The ghost informed the priest that the two most popular saints in our calendar, the Confessor and the Martyr, had undertaken to make war upon these walls. "Had they been built," said the shade, "for the defence of London, and in order to find food for masons and joiners, they might have been borne; but they are built against the poor citizens; and if St. Thomas had not destroyed them, the Confessor would have swept them away."

The names of these popular saints still cling to the Water gate. One of the rooms, fitted up as an oratory, and having a piscina still perfect, is called the Confessor's Chapel; and the barbican itself, instead of bearing its official name of Water gate, is only known as St. Thomas's tower.

The whole wharf, twelve hundred feet in length, lay open to the Thames, except a patch of ground at the lower end, near the Iron gate, leading towards the hospital of St. Catharine the Virgin, where a few sheds and magazines were built at an early date. Except these sheds, the wharf was clear. When cannon came into use, they were laid along the ground, as well as trained on the walls and the mural towers.

Three accents marked, as it were, the river front—the Queen's stair, the Water way, and the Galleyman stair. The Queen's stair, the landing-place of royal princes, and of such great persons as came to the Tower on state affairs, lay beneath the Bye-ward gate and the Belfry, having a passage into the fortress by a bridge and postern, through the Bye-ward tower into Water Lane. The Water way was that cutting through the bank which passed under St. Thomas's tower to the flight of steps in Water Lane; the entrance popularly known as Traitor's gate. The Galleyman stair lay under the Cradle tower, by which there was a private entrance into the royal quarter.

This stair was not much used, except when the services of Traitor's gate were out of order. Then prisoners, who could not enter by the approach of honour, were landed at the Galleyman stair.

Lying open to the river and to the streets, the wharf was a promenade, a place of traffic and of recreation, to which folk resorted on high days and fair days. Men who loved sights were pretty sure to find something worth seeing at either the Queen's stair or Traitor's gate. All personages coming to the Tower in honour, were landed at the Queen's stair; all personages coming in disgrace were pushed through the Traitor's gate. Now, a royal barge, with a queen on board, was going forth in her bravery of gold and pennons; now a lieutenant's boat, returning with a culprit in the stern, a headsman standing at his side, holding in his hand the fatal axe.

Standing on the bank, now busy with a new life, these pictures of an old time start into being like a mystic writing on the wall. Two of these scenes come back with warm rich colouring to the inner eye.

Now:—it is London in the reign of that Henry the Builder, who loved to adorn the fortress in which he dwelt. Whose barge is moored at yon stair, with the royal arms? What men are those with tabard and clarion? Who is that proud and beautiful woman, her fair face fired with rage, who steps into her galley, but whose foot appears to scorn the plank on which it treads? She is the Queen; wife of the great builder; Elinor of Provence, called by her minstrels Elinor la Belle. A poetess, a friend of singers, a lover of music, she is said to have brought song and art into the English court from her native land. The first of our laureates came in her train. She has flushed the palace with jest and joust, with tinkle of citherns, with clang of horns. But the Queen has faults, for which her gracious talent and her peerless beauty fail to atone. Her greed is high, her anger ruthless. Her court is filled with an outcry of merchants who have been mulcted of queen-geld, a wrangle of friars who have been robbed by her kith and kin, a roar of tiremen and jewellers clamorous for their debts, a murmur of knights and barons protesting against her loans, a clatter of poor Jews objecting to be spoiled. Despite her gifts of birth and wit, Elinor la Belle is the most unpopular princess in the world. She has been living at the Tower, which her husband loves; but she feels that her palace is a kind of jail; she wishes to get away, and she has sent for her barge and watermen, hoping to escape from her people and to breathe the free air of her Windsor home.

Will the commons let her go? Proudly her barge puts off. The tabards bend and the clarions blare. But the commons, who wait her coming on London Bridge, dispute her passage and drive her back with curses, crying, "Drown the witch! Drown the witch!" Unable to pass the bridge, Elinor has to turn her keel, and, with passionate rage in her heart, to find her way back.

Her son, the young and fiery Edward, never forgets this insult to his mother; by-and-by he will seek revenge for it on Lewes field; and by mad pursuit of his revenge, he will lose the great fight and imperil his father's crown.

Again:—it is London in the reign of Bluff King Hal—the husband of two fair wives. The river is alive with boats; the air is white with smoke; the sun overhead is burning with golden May. Thousands on thousands of spectators dot the banks; for to-day a bride is coming home to the King, the beauty of whose face sets old men's fancies and young men's eyes agog. On the wharf, near the Queen's stair, stands a burly figure; tall beyond common men; broad in chest and strong in limb; dressed in a doublet of gold and crimson, a cap and plume, shoes with rosettes and diamonds, a dagger by his side, a George upon his breast. It is the King, surrounded by dukes and earls, awaiting the arrival of a barge, in the midst of blaring trumpets and exploding sakers. A procession sweeps along; stealing up from Greenwich, with plashing oars and merry strains; fifty great boats, with a host of wherries on their flanks; a vessel firing guns in front, and a long arrear of craft behind.

From the first barge lands the Lord Mayor; from the second trips the bride; from the rest stream out the picturesque City Companies. Cannons roar, and bells fling out a welcome to the Queen; for this is not simply a great day in the story of one lovely woman, but a great day in the story of English life. Now is the morning time of a new era; for on this bright May—

> "The gospel light first shines from Boleyn's eyes,"

and men go mad with hope of things which are yet to come.

The King catches that fair young bride in his arms, kisses her soft cheek, and bears her in, through the Bye-ward tower.

The picture fades from view, and presently reappears. Is it the same? The Queen—the stair—the barge—the crowd of men—all these are here. Yet the picture is not the same. No burly Henry stands by the stair; no guns disturb the sky; no blast of trumpets greets the royal barge; no train of aldermen and masters waits upon the Queen. The lovely face looks older by a dozen years; yet scarcely three have passed since that fair form was clasped in the King's arms, kissed, and carried by the bridge. This time she is a prisoner, charged with having done such things as pen cannot write; things which would be treason, not to her lord only, but to her womanhood, and to the King of kings.

When she alights on the Queen's stair, she turns to Sir William Kingston, Constable of the Tower, and asks, "Must I go into a dungeon?" "No, madam," says the Constable; "you will lie in the same room which you occupied before." She falls on her knees.

"It is too good for me," she cries; and then weeps for a long time, lying on the cold stones, with all the people standing by in tears. She begs to have the sacrament in her own room, that she may pray with a pure heart; saying she is free from sin, and that she is, and has always been, the King's true wedded wife.

"Shall I die without justice?" she inquires. "Madam," says Kingston, "the poorest subject would have justice." The lady only laughs a feeble laugh.

Other, and not less tragic scenes drew crowds to the Water-way from the Thames.

Beneath this arch has moved a long procession of our proudest peers, our fairest women, our bravest soldiers, our wittiest poets—Buckingham and Strafford; Lady Jane Grey, the Princess Elizabeth; William Wallace, David Bruce; Surrey, Raleigh—names in which the splendour, poetry, and sentiment of our national story are embalmed. Most of them left it, high in rank and rich in life, to return, by the same dark passage, in a few brief hours, poorer than the beggars who stood shivering on the bank; in the eyes of the law, and in the words of their fellows, already *dead*.

From this gateway went the barge of that Duke of Buckingham, the rival of Wolsey, the last permanent High Constable of England. Buckingham had not dreamed that an offence so slight as his could bring into the dust so proud a head; for his offence was nothing; some silly words which he had bandied lightly in the Rose, a City tavern, about the young king's journey into France. He could not see that his head was struck because it moved so high; nay, his proud boast that if his enemies sent him to the Tower, ten thousand friends would storm the walls to set him free, was perhaps the occasion of his fall. When sentence of death was given, he marched back to his barge, where Sir Thomas Lovel, then Constable, stood ready to hand him to the seat of honour. "Nay," said the Duke to Lovel, "not so now

When I came to Westminster I was Lord High Constable and Duke of Buckingham; now I am but poor Edward Stafford."

Landed at the Temple stair, he was marched along Fleet Street, through St. Paul's Churchyard, and by way of Cheap to the Tower; the axe borne before him all the way; Sir William Sandys holding him by the right arm, Sir Nicholas Vaux by the left. A band of Augustine friars stood praying round the block; and when his head had fallen into the dust they bore his remains to St. Austin's Church.

On these steps, too, beneath this Water-gate, Elizabeth, then a fair young girl, with gentle, feminine face and golden hair, was landed by her jealous sister's servants. The day was Sunday—Palm Sunday—with a cold March rain coming down, and splashing the stones with mud. She could not land without soiling her feet and clothes, and for a moment she refused to leave her barge. Sir John Gage, the Constable, and his guards, stood by to receive her. "Are all these harnessed men for me?" she asked. "No, madam," said Sir John. "Yea," she replied, "I know it is so." Then she stood up in her boat and leaped on shore. As she set foot on the stone steps, she exclaimed, in a spirit prouder than her looks—for in her youth she had none of that leonine beauty of her later years—"Here landeth as true a subject, being a prisoner, as ever landed at these stairs; and before Thee, O God, I speak it." Perhaps she was thinking of her mother, who had landed on the neighbouring wharf. Anne had fallen on her knees on these cold stones, and here had called on God to help her, as she was not guilty of the things of which she stood accused. In those two attitudes of appeal one reads the nature of these two proud and gentle women, each calling Heaven to witness her innocence of crime—Elizabeth defiant, erect; Anne suppliant, on her knees.

CHAPTER IV.

RIVER RIGHTS.

THE Wharf has story of another kind.

Under our Plantagenet kings, the English folk—then called in derision the "Englishry," just as under our Tudor kings the Irish kernes were called in derision the "Irishry"—claimed the right of going into the Tower when they wished, to make complaint either to the king or to his judges, of any wrong from which they suffered. One of the king's officers, the Tower warden, was a man with extensive powers, and a hundred archers at his back. A subject always in dispute between this officer and the city folk was a claim put forth by him, to catch fish in what the commons called an unfair way. The warden claimed a right to put kidels in the water, not only in front of the Wharf, but in any other part of the stream. Now a kidel was a weir, filled up with nets, which caught all fish coming down with the tide, both the small fry and the old flappers. What free angler could stand this claim? Through five or six reigns our fathers fought against this abuse; and the question of a warden's right to put kidels in the Thames was a topic which roused the water-side folk into fiercer passion than reports of fighting in Picardy and pilgrimage in the Holy Land.

A kidel in front of the Wharf was an outrage as well as an injury. Our fathers loved the rod and line.

Hundreds of years before Izaac quaffed the village ale and listened to the milkmaid's song, his foregoers had been wont to cast their lines into the Lea, the Wandle, and the Thames. Nor was the gentle craft pursued by them in sport alone. Fish was an article of food; the fisheries on the Thames being large enough to employ, and rich enough to feed, a tenth of the population on its banks; and to all these pleasures and profits, the right of a Tower warden to net the stream with kidels was a serious bar. The water-side taverns were up in arms, when these water-side taverns were the meeting-houses of all our turbulent and daring spirits. They had, indeed, good reason for their wrath; since the king's warden, not content with setting his own kidels in the Thames, rented to others his privilege of interfering with honest sport and decent trade. For a small sum of money any rascal on the river could buy his license, and set up kidels in the Lea and in the Medway as well as in the Thames. The effect of netting these rivers was to destroy the salmon and shad, as well as to capture the flounder and the trout.

Now and then, a prince in his distress consented to forego this river right; but his warden took scant notice of a pledge which he thought injurious to his pocket and derogatory to his prince.

Lion Heart strove to bring this quarrel to an end; and, in the eighth year of his reign, in the press of a sharp war, he made what he said was a high sacrifice in giving up kidels, and putting his warden of the Tower on a level with humbler and fairer folk. For this surrender Lion Heart expected to be paid, not only in earthly coin, but in heavenly grace. In the grant, by which he gave the public their own, he declared that—for the salvation of his soul, for the salvation of his father's soul, and for the salvation of the souls of all his ancestors, as well as for the benefit of his people and the peace of his realm—no more kidels should be set up in the Thames.

But Lion Heart failed to keep his pledge. The warden was always nigh; the king was often far away; and the kidel question helped to keep alive the long resistance to King John.

In the Great Charter there was a special clause on kidels; King John consenting, among other things, that, under pain of excommunication, all kidels should be removed from the Thames and from his other streams. Yet the warden, paying scant attention to a parchment which he probably could not read, laid down his weirs and nets as before, only desisting for a time when the Sheriff of London, backed by an armed band, dropped down the river and seized his nets.

One fight was made by the London folk in the reign of Henry the Third, in behalf of sport and trade, which became famous in City story, and got a niche in every old chronicle and in many a popular song.

Complaints were laid before Andrew Buckrell, Mayor, Henry de Cotham, Sheriff, and other magistrates, that many new kidels had been laid in the Thames and the Medway, by authority of the Tower warden, contrary to the City franchise, and to the great injury of the common people. More than elsewhere this wrong was being done to them in the Medway, in the neighbourhood of Yantlet Creek. This was a ticklish thing; for although the Thames lay under the jurisdiction of London for many purposes, it was not clear that the Mayor and a City band had any right to pursue offenders up the Medway, and to seize them under the walls of Rochester Castle. They put their right to the test. Jordan de Coventry, second sheriff, with a body of men, well armed and resolute, started, on the 6th of January 1236–7, for Yantlet Creek, where they fell suddenly and stoutly on the master fishermen and their servants. They found no less than thirty kidels beyond that creek towards the sea. With little ado they tore up the nets and seized the masters; Joscelyn and four good men of Rochester; seven good men of Strood; three good men of Cliff, all master-mariners, with nine others, their helpers and abettors in the wrong.

Jordan brought these captured nets and culprits up to London, where he gave the nets to the first sheriff, and lodged the master-mariners in Newgate.

When the news of this raid reached Rochester, Strood, and Cliff, much din arose, and men from these towns rode up to London to see what could be done for Joscelyn and his fellows. They applied to the King for help, on the ground that no man had power to seize the King's subjects by force, and cast them into jail, without his license. Henry inclined to take this view; but the mayor and sheriffs maintained their right to arrest offenders against the King's laws and the City franchises. Being then absent from London, Henry sent a writ to the mayor commanding him to accept bail for the appearance of his prisoners, until such time as the King could hold a court to try the case.

This court was called in the Palace of Kennington; when Buckrell and the citizens, Joscelyn and the master-mariners, appeared before the Archbishop of York, the Lord Chancellor, and other great personages, among whom the most eminent was William de Raleigh, the famous justiciar, a collateral ancestor of Sir Walter.

William de Raleigh, who held a brief, as it were, for the Crown, put Buckrell and his men on their mettle. "How," he asked them, "had they, with such rash daring, seized the king's liegemen in their boats, and cast them into a common jail?" Buckrell answered him: "that he had seized Joscelyn and the rest for just reasons: because, being taken in the act of using kidels, they were infringing the rights of the City, lessening the dignity of the Crown, and incurring the ban of excommunication, in accordance with an express clause in the Great Charter." He asked, in conclusion, that the judges should enforce the law, and punish the master-mariners by a heavy fine.

William de Raleigh took this view of the kidel business, and his verdict gave immense delight at Guildhall. He sentenced Joscelyn and the other masters to pay a fine of ten pounds each—the fines to be rendered to the chief men in the City.

A great fire was lighted in Westcheape, and the captured nets from Yantlet Creek were burned in presence of a joyful crowd.

CHAPTER V.

THE WHITE TOWER.

THE shell of the White tower, ninety feet high, from twelve to fifteen feet thick, is in four tiers, without reckoning the leads and turrets: (1) the vaults; (2) the main floor; (3) the banqueting floor; (4) the state floor. Each tier contains three rooms; not to count the stairs, corridors, and chambers which are sunk into the solid wall; a west room, extending from north to south, the whole length of the tower; an east room, lying parallel to the first; and a cross chamber, occupying the south-east corner of the pile. These rooms are parted from each other by walls, not less than ten feet thick, which rise from the foundation to the roof. On each angle of the tower stands a turret, one of which is round. The parapet is pierced for defending fire.

(1.) The vaults lie underground, with no stairs and doors of their own. Some piercings in the shell let in a little air and still less light. These vaults were the old dungeons of the keep—the home of pirates, rebels, and persecuted Jews. One of these rooms, the cross chamber, is darker and damper than the other two. It was called Little Ease, and is, in fact, a crypt beneath a crypt. When the Tower was full of prisoners, these vaults were used as prison lodgings, even in the Tudor and Stuart times. A few inscriptions can still be traced in the stone. John Fisher, *alias* John Fairfax, *alias* John Percy, one of the Jesuit Fathers concerned in the Powder Plot, has left the following protest:—

> SACRIS VESTIBUS INDUTUS
> DUM SACRA MYSTERIA
> SERVANS, CAPTUS ET IN
> HOC ANGUSTO CARCERE
> INCLUSUS. I. FISHER.

There is ground for believing that Little Ease was the lodging of Guy Fawkes; and of some at least of his confederates in the Powder Plot.

Out of the north-east vault a door opens into a secret hole, built for some purpose in the dividing wall—a cell in which there is neither breath of air nor ray of light. By a rule of the Tower which assigns every mysterious room to Raleigh, this vault is called Walter Raleigh's cell.

(2.) The main floor consists of two large rooms, and the crypt. This tier was the garrison stage; held by the King's guards, who fought with halberds and pikes. The crypt, a lofty and noble room, was occasionally used as a prison. Two niches have been scooped from the solid wall; one of them larger than the other; and this niche is also called Raleigh's cell. Of course he was never in it. May it not have been "that secret jewel-room in the White tower" of which we read so often in the royal books?

On the jambs of this room a man may read the prison records left by Sir Thomas Wyat, of Allington Castle; by Robert Rudston, of Dartford; by Thomas Fane and Thomas Culpeper, of Aylesford; unruly gallants who were compromised in that wild political masquerade against Queen Mary's government, which is known in our annals as The Rising of the Men of Kent.

(3.) The banqueting floor was a part of the royal palace, though not of the personal and domestic part. The long room was the banqueting-hall, and is noticeable as being the only room in the keep provided with a fireplace. The cross chamber was the chapel of

St. John the Evangelist, which occupied two tiers of the keep. Most of our royal and princely captives lived in these apartments—men like Ralph Flambard, Bishop of Durham; Griffin, Prince of Wales; John de Baliol, King of Scots; Prince Charles of France, the famous troubadour.

(4.) The state floor contained the great council-chamber; a smaller room called the Lesser hall, in which the justiciars sat; and the galleries of St. John's chapel, from which there was a passage into the royal apartments.

The roof was flat, with oaken supports and bands of enormous strength. The council-chamber beneath it is one of the marvels of early English construction; being strong enough to bear not only the balisters and bowmen for whom it was built, but the sakers and carronades which came into use in a later reign. One of the four turrets, round and larger than the rest, was added as a watch-tower. In early times this round turret was the prison of Maud the Fair; in later times it was an observatory, from which Flamsteed out-watched the stars.

The most surprising feature in Gundulf's keep is the scanty means of access. He seems to have given it only one door, and that so narrow, that a man marching through the corridor filled it up. The vaults had no entrance from without; and no means of communication with the upper tiers except by one well-stair. The main-floor had no way either up or down except by the same well-stair, which could only be approached through a passage built in the wall. The upper tiers had other stairs, so that people could pass from the banqueting-hall to the council-chamber and the parapets with comparative ease; but the communications of those lower tiers could be stopped by the halberds of three or four resolute men.

Yet Gundulf's castle on the Thames was not a safe prison for daring and ingenious men. The first offender ever lodged within its walls contrived to escape from his guards, to let himself down from a window, and to slip through the postern to his boat. This bold offender was that Ralph of Durham, called the Firebrand and the Lion, who for many years had been treasurer and justiciar to the Norman kings. On the death of Rufus he was seized by the commons until the new king's pleasure should be known about him; and Henry the Scholar, who had good deeds rather than good rights to befriend him in his contest with Robert for the crown, sent the unpopular prelate to the Tower. Henry was not inclined to harshness; and Ralph, though lodged in the keep which he had helped to build, was treated like a guest. He lived in the upper rooms, on the tier now known as the banqueting-floor; his rooms having plenty of space and light, a good fireplace, a private closet, and free access to St. John's chapel. William de Mandeville, Constable of the Tower, was appointed his keeper, and two shillings a day were paid from the King's exchequer for his diet. He was suffered to have his own servants and chaplains in his rooms, and to send out for such wines and meats as his stomach craved and his purse could buy. One of the richest men in England, he could buy a good deal; one of the cleverest men in England, he could scheme a long way. But before resorting to his money and his wits in self-defence, Ralph tried how far he could reckon on the virtues of his pastoral staff. A bishop was not only a baron of the realm, but a prince of the universal Church. No doubt he had exercised lay functions; acting as a finacier, sitting as a judge; but still he was a priest, on whom secular laws were held to have no binding force. On this ground he appealed to Anselm, then lord primate, as to his brother and his chief. Anselm, who had just come back from that exile into which he had been driven by Ralph and his master, was in no saintly humour. "Out on this caitiff," cried the lord primate, "I know him not, neither as brother nor as priest." Anselm took the part of Henry, whom his flock was beginning to call Gaffer Goodrich, and to love with exceeding warmth on account of Goody Maud, the young Saxon princess whom he had taken from a convent to make his wife.

Failing in this appeal, Ralph took counsel with his wits. The stout Norman knights who kept guard in his chamber, were jolly fellows, fond of good cheer and lusty at a song. On this weakness he began to play. Sending for good wine, and giving orders to his cook, he invited to his table a belt of boisterous knights. When folks looked up at the keep, in which their enemy was caged, they saw lights in the windows rather late, and haply went to bed in the pious hope that their bad bishop was going quickly to his doom. At length his scheme was ripe. Asking the knights to supper, he sent out for jars of wine; a potent liquor which, in due time, laid those warriors asleep on bench and floor. The time was winter (the date February 1101), and night came down quickly on the Tower. When the guards were all drunk, the sober bishop rose from his table, drew a long coil of rope from one of the jars, passed into the South corridor, tied his cord to the window shaft, and taking his crosier with him, let himself down. He was a fat, heavy man; the cord was rather short, and he fell some feet to the ground. But trusty servants who were in waiting, picked him up, and hurried him away into a boat, by which he escaped with his staff and his money into France.

The window from which he escaped is sixty-five feet from the ground.

In the reign of King John, the White tower received one of the first and fairest of a long line of female victims, in that Maud Fitzwalter, who was known to the singers of her time as Maud the Fair. The father of this beautiful girl was Robert, Lord Fitzwalter, of Castle Baynard on the Thames, one of John's greatest barons; yet the King, during a fit of violence with his Queen, Isabella of Angouleme, fell madly into love with this young girl. As neither the lady herself nor her powerful sire would listen to his disgraceful suit, the King is said to have seized her at Dunmow by force, and brought her to the Tower. Fitzwalter raised an outcry, on which the King sent troops into Castle Baynard and his other houses; and when the baron protested against these wrongs, his master banished him from the realm. Fitzwalter fled to France, with his wife and his other children, leaving his daughter Maud in the Tower, where she suffered a daily insult in the King's unlawful suit. On her proud and scornful answer to his passion being heard, John carried her up to the roof, and locked her in the round turret, standing on the north-east angle of the keep. Maud's cage was the highest, chilliest den in the Tower; but neither cold, nor solitude, nor hunger, could break her strength. In the rage of his disappointed love, the King sent one of his minions to her room with a poisoned egg, of which the brave girl ate, and died.

Her father now returned to England; put himself in front of the great revolt of prelates and nobles; took command of the insurgent forces, who hailed him proudly as Marshal of the army of God and Holy Church. Fitzwalter fought against John, until the tyrant, bending before his outraged people, signed the Great Charter of our liberties at Runnymede.

Maud was buried in the Abbey of Dunmow. Her father took possession of the Tower as a pledge; at a later time he went forth as a Crusader; and died at Damietta fighting for the Tomb of Christ.

At a distance of fifty years, the banqueting hall received two royal tenants in John de Baliol and David Bruce.

After the hot encounter at Dunbar, Baliol yielded his crown and kingdom to Edward the First, who returned to London, bringing with him, not only his royal captive, but Prince Edward of Scotland, a host of noble chiefs, the Scottish crown and sceptre, and that stone of destiny which lies in Westminster Abbey, the seat of our English kings. David, son of the famous Robert Bruce, was taken prisoner by Queen Philippa at the battle of Neville's Cross.

Among old papers in the Record Office is a book of account, kept by Ralph de Sandwich, Constable of the Tower, during the confinement of John de Baliol, from which we get some glimpses into his household life in the White tower. Payments are made to Dominus William his chaplain; to Master Adam his tailor; to Richard his pantler, and to Henry his butler; to Chyware and Gautrier his two chamberlains; to Peter his barber; to Henry his clerk of the chapel. The household was large; including a stall of horses and a pack of dogs; and the expense was fixed by King Edward's council at seventeen shillings a day. After a while, one esquire, one huntsman, one page, one barber, two greyhounds, ten beagles, and one horse were sent away; reducing the daily cost to the country by half-a-crown. The Scottish King had still one chaplain, two esquires, two grooms of the chamber, three pages, one barber, one tailor, one laundress, one butler, and one pantler. Baliol remained in the White tower for 189 days, after which he was given up to John de Pontissera, Papal Nuncio and Bishop of Winchester, on the understanding that he would in future reside abroad.

Griffin, Prince of Wales, a man who had been yielded into Henry the Builder's power by his own brother, Prince David, was lodged in the upper room from which Flambard was known to have escaped. Griffin, who was a fat man, like Flambard, thought a soldier should be able to do what a priest had done. Tearing his bed-clothes into shreds, he twisted them into a rope, by means of which he hoped to lower himself to the ground; but the clothes would not bear his weight; the coil snapped as he was slipping down; he broke his neck in the fall, and was killed on the spot. He seems to have found no means of getting from Flambard's window, and to have tried his chance of dropping some ninety feet from the leads. In the margin of Matthew Paris' beautiful copy of his own "Historia Anglorum," there is a drawing of Griffin's fall. The coil of bed-linen is fastened to the parapet on the roof. Matthew, who was living at the time, and often in London, must have known how the Welsh prince came by his death. Griffin's son, then a mere child, was left a prisoner in the Tower. A few years later the young prince got away, when he returned to Wales, regained his principality, and fought with desperate valour against his English foes. Slain in the reign of Edward Longshanks, his head was brought to London, and fixed upon the turret, from which his father had fallen into his grave.

Edward the Second and his Queen, Isabella the Fair, kept a splendid, riotous court in the Tower, enlivened by love and war, by political quarrels, by religious festivals, and criminal intrigues. Here the princess known in story as Joanna de la Tour was born. The royal apartments in which the mother lay were so worn and rent, that the rain came rattling through the rafters into her bed; and John de Cromwell, then Constable, was dismissed from office for this neglect, and for other offences against his lord and lady. When Edward went away from London, on his wars and other follies, the fair Isabella ruffled her indolent mood by receiving visits in her chamber from Roger Mortimer, the handsome and reckless Border chief, who was then a prisoner in the keep. Mortimer got into the kitchen, crept up the kitchen chimney, and came out on the roof, from which he escaped to the river, and so away into France. It is an old story: you can easily break prison when you have fallen in love with the jailor's wife. Queen Isabella and Mortimer were not long apart. Every one is familiar with the tale of their guilty passion, their stormy career, their tragic end; the most singular episode in the history of our royal race.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARLES OF ORLEANS.

OF the captives who have helped to make this Banqueting hall a place of poetic memories, the most engaging is Prince Charles of Orleans, the unhappy troubadour. This young French prince, grandson of Charles the Fifth, father of Louis the Twelfth,—a soldier, a poet, a politician,—one of the chief commanders of the French chivalry, fell, together with a host of princes and nobles, into the hands of Harry of Monmouth, on the field of Agincourt.

Charles's life is an epic of love and war, of glory and defeat, of suffering and resignation. Nature and events conspired to throw the conquering Henry and the captive Charles into opposite lists. Not only were they enemies in the field, but rivals in love. The Prince's father, Louis of Orleans, and the King's father, Henry of Lancaster, had each affected to consider himself heir to the crown of France; a splendid claim, which came down, in time, to their sons. Louis of Orleans, making himself the champion of a royal and unhappy lady, Isabella of Valois, Queen of England, widow of Richard the Second, had sent a challenge to Henry of Lancaster, as he contemptuously called the King of England, which Henry had declined with a cold and proud disdain. Louis called Henry a coward; Henry called Louis a fool. The young princes had both been in love with the "fair woman," as Shakespeare calls her,—the widowed English queen, a daughter of Charles the Sixth—and Charles had carried away the prize. Harry was then our madcap Prince of Wales, the friend of Poins, the companion of Sir John. Charles was a poet, a musician, a courtier; and although Hal was of higher rank and riper age, Isabella had chosen the softer, more accomplished prince for her future mate. Rivals in ambition and in love, every turn in their fortunes helped to make English Henry dislike the young French prince.

The married life of Charles and Queen Isabella had been brief and clouded, though they had loved each other with a perfect heart. His father, Duke Louis, was a reprobate; her father, the King of France, was mad. Her mother, Isabeau the Wicked, was suspected of carrying on a guilty intrigue with Louis. Suspected is an ugly word, not lightly to be raised against a woman; but conjugal infidelity was not the lightest of Queen Isabeau's crimes. Duke Louis, her lover, was murdered in the streets at midnight, just as he was leaving her palace gates; murdered by command of John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, who openly avowed and justified his act. Violante, Charles's mother, and Isabella, his betrothed wife, went about the streets of Paris, clad in the deepest mourning, crying for revenge against the shedder of blood; but no redress could be obtained from the crazy king against Fearless John. Violante died of a broken heart. Isabella, the beautiful English queen, was given to Charles; who lost her in a year—lost her in childbirth—when the young prince, only nineteen years of age when she died, whom grief had made a poet, bewailed her loss in verses which have made him famous, and are still recited as a consolation by many a widowed lip.

Reasons of state induced him to marry a second wife; Bona, daughter of Bernard, Count of Armagnac, the soul of his party in the court; and this Duchess Bona became a tender mother to the infant princess left to his care by the dying Queen.

When madcap Harry, casting off Poins and Jack, broke into Normandy, putting his claims on the crown of France to the rude arbitrament of war, the young poet, like all the princes of his house, Bourbon, D'Albret, Bar, Brabant, Alençon, flew to arms, to defend his uncle's crown and his own eventual rights. After capturing Harfleur, the English king, Henry, was marching by the coast-line into Picardy; but a vast, in their own belief an unconquerable, array of spears blocked up his way to Calais. In the tent scene on the night before Agincourt, Shakespeare has caught with subtle art, though merely in a few light words, the characters of the French princes then encamped by the Somme. Orleans, who talks of sonnets, and swears by the white hand of his lady, girds at the English king, his living rival in ambition and in love. Yet no braver soldier fell among the wounded on that fatal field than Charles, the poet-prince, who was found by his conqueror bleeding and speechless on a heap of slain. At first the prince refused to eat food; but his royal captor, who carried him to his tent, persuaded him to live, brought him into England, clapped him in the White tower, and fixed a ransom of 300,000 crowns upon his head.

At that time Charles was twenty-four years old. His infant daughter by Queen Isabella, afterwards Duchess of Alençon, and his second wife, the Duchess Bona, were left behind in France. The latter he was not to see again; for how in a broken and defeated France could such a sum as 300,000 crowns be raised?

Henry, in fact, preferred his prisoner to his money; for, after his march on Paris, and his marriage to Princess Catharine of Valois, Isabella's sister, it became of vast importance to him that Charles should die without having a son. After the Dauphin's death, Henry was promised the crown of France; a promise which could never be made good, unless Charles of Orleans should die without male issue. So long, therefore, as the ransom was unpaid, and Henry had a pretext for detaining Charles in London, the poet was likely to remain a prisoner. He remained a prisoner five-and-twenty years!

This time was spent in writing verses in French and English, both of which languages he spoke and wrote with ease; lyrics on his lost love and on his absent wife. The dead Queen was his muse, and the most beautiful and tender of his verses are addressed to her.

In the Royal Book of verse, now in the British Museum, an exquisite volume, highly illuminated, which appears to have been given as a bridal present from Henry of Richmond to Elizabeth of York, there is an excellent picture of Prince Charles's life in the keep. One drawing in this book is of peculiar interest; in the first place, as being the oldest view of the Tower extant; in the second place, as fixing the chamber in which the poet lived; in the third place, as showing, in a series of pictures, the life which he led. First, we see the prince in the Banqueting hall, seated at his desk, composing his poems, with gentlemen in attendance, and guards on duty. Next, we observe him leaning on a window-sill, gazing outwards into space. Then we have him at the foot of the White tower, embracing the messenger who brings the ransom. Again, we see him mounting his horse. Then we have him, and his friendly messenger, riding away. Lastly, he is seated in a barge, which lusty rowers are pulling down the stream, for the boat that is to carry him back to France.

Henry of Agincourt had been dead many years, and the French had recovered nearly the whole of France (thanks to Jeanne Darc, and to the poet's natural brother, the famous Bastard of Orleans) before Charles's day of liberation came. Every year his life had become more precious to France, as the sons of Charles the Sixth dropped, one by one, leaving no heirs to his crown. At length the Duke of Burgundy, as an act of expiation for the past, of reconciliation for the future, paid the enormous ransom fixed upon his head, and set the poet free.

When Charles arrived in Paris, he found the Duchess Bona dead, and his daughter, whom he had left a baby of five, a woman of thirty years. Reasons of state compelling him to begin life again, he married, for his third wife, Mary of Cleves, by whom he had a son, called Louis in remembrance of his father; and this child of the ransomed poet lived to mount the throne of France; the politic and successful prince so well known in history as Louis the Twelfth.

CHAPTER VII.

UNCLE GLOUCESTER.

> "If I may counsel you, some day or two
> Your Highness shall repose you at the Tower.
> ——I do not like the Tower."

THANKS to the great poet, no name is stamped so darkly on the Tower as that of Gloucester. Richard seems to haunt the pile. If the word Tower crops up in talk, nine persons out of ten will throw his figure into the front. They see, in their mind's eye, Gloucester with his knife at King Henry's throat; Gloucester denouncing Hastings at the board; Gloucester in rusty armour on the wall. Men picture him as drowning his brother Clarence in the butt of wine; as murdering his nephews, King Edward and the Duke of York. The localities of his crimes, and of the crimes imputed to him, are shewn. He stabbed King Henry in the Hall tower, now the Jewel house. He accused Lord Hastings in the Council chamber, and struck off his head on the terrace below the keep. He drowned his brother in the Bowyer tower. He addressed the citizens from the terrace now known as Raleigh's walk. Brackenbury was kneeling in St. John's chapel, when he received the King's order to kill the princes. The boys were lodged by him in the rooms over the entrance gate, then known as the Garden tower. They were interred in the passage, at the foot of a private stair. The bones of these royal youths were afterwards dug out from behind a stair in the keep.

That the princes were murdered in the Tower there ought to be no doubt. Two of the greatest men in English story vouch it; not in the general feature only, but in the minor details of the crime. Sir Thomas More (the true author, as I think, of the book which bears his name) wrote at the time—about the year 1513—while he was acting as judge of the sheriffs' court, and while two of the four actors in the business were still alive. Lord Bacon, who knew the place and the story well; who probably heard the Tower authorities, when they read a welcome to King James, describe the Bloody tower as the scene of that royal murder; seems to have felt no doubt on the point. What More and Bacon wrote, received clinching proof in the discovery which was afterwards made of the children's bones.

Yet the story of this murder has been doubted; not in detail only, but in block. In the first place, political passion led to reports that the princes were not dead; and when these political reports fell away with time, they left behind them a bodiless spirit in the shape of historic doubt.

Partisans of Lambert Symnell and Perkin Warbeck were bound to say the two princes had not been killed by Tyrrel in the manner commonly supposed, and that one of them had not been killed at all. Duchess Marguerite (King Edward's sister) received young Warbeck as her nephew; the Irish nobles owned him for their prince; while a powerful English party, hating the victor of Bosworth field, were secretly disposed to push his claim. To all these partisans of the House of York, that story of a midnight murder was a fatal bar.

From that day to our own some ghost of a doubt has always fluttered round the tale. Bayley denies that if the crime were done at all it could have been done in the Gate house. But his reasons for rejecting a tradition which certainly goes back to the time of the alleged murder are very weak. He thinks it unlikely that Gloucester would confine the royal youths in so obscure a place. He thinks it absurd to call a room *bloody* because two boys had been *smothered* in it. He finds, in a survey made in the reign of Henry the Eighth, that this pile was called the Garden tower, not the Bloody tower, as he thinks it ought to have been styled if the legend of the crime had then been considered true. On what slight grounds historic doubt may rest!

Richard's scruples about putting his nephews into a dull lodging, after he had resolved to kill them, may be dismissed with a smile. Yet, fact being fact, it must be added that the rooms over the gate were a part of the royal palace, communicating with the King's bedroom in the Lantern, through the private chapel and the Great hall. Nothing about the Gate house then suggested dismal thoughts. It was the Garden tower, called from a garden into which it opened. It was lighted on both sides, so that the windows commanded views of the inner and outer wards, as well as of the wharf, the river, and the bridge. It had a separate entrance to the pleasant promenade on the wall. King Henry the Sixth had lived in the adjoining room. As to the fact of calling a place *bloody* on account of two boys having been smothered in it, a word may be said. Old writers do not say that *both* the boys were smothered; indeed, the very first narrative of this murder (that of John Rastall, brother-in-law of More) states that the ruffians smothered one of the boys with a pillow and cut the other boy's throat with a knife. As to the change of name, the answer is brief. Garden tower was an official name; the survey made by Henry the Eighth was an official work. It is only after many ages that in a public document you can expect to see an official name replaced by a popular name. The Bloody tower is not the only one which has changed its name in deference to public whim. The official name of the new Jewel house was once the Hall tower, that of the Lantern was once the New tower. Beauchamp tower is known as Cobham tower, Martin tower as Jewel tower, Brick tower as Burbage tower, and Water gate as St. Thomas' tower.

Edward the Fifth and his brother, Richard, Duke of York, one twelve years old, the other eight, were living in the palace, under charge of Sir John Brackenbury, then Lieutenant of the Tower; the young king having been deprived of his royal power without being deposed from his royal rank. Gloucester ruled the kingdom as Protector. The queen-mother, Elizabeth Woodville, who had seen her second boy torn from her arms, with wild foreboding of his fate, lived in sanctuary with the Abbot of Westminster, occupying the Jerusalem chamber and that adjoining room which is now used by the Westminster boys as a dining-room. The fair Saxon lady, whose pink and white flesh and shower of golden hair had won for her the wandering heart of Edward the Fourth, could hear the mallets of joiners in the abbey, could see the waggons of vintners and cooks bringing wine and meat to the great hall, by command of Gloucester, for the coronation of her eldest son. But the royal widow knew in her heart that the festival day would never dawn.

Her brother, who should have held the Tower for Edward, forsook his post to join her in sanctuary under the abbot's roof, where he felt that, come what might, his head would be safe. Gloucester took charge of the fortress in his nephew's name. Working in the dark, with shrugs and hints, he began to sound the great earls and barons as to how far they would go with him; and to throw out bruits of a secret marriage having taken place between his brother, the late king, and Elinor Talbot; by which reports the legitimacy of his nephews would be brought into doubt before Holy Church. Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath, and Lord High Chancellor, is said to have helped the Duke, by saying that *he* had married the King to Elinor; a fact which he had concealed during Edward's reign, because his royal master had afterwards made the still more fascinating Elizabeth Woodville the public partner of his throne. Some earls and knights took up the prelate's tale; a few from fear of the Duke, others because they may have thought it true. Edward the Fourth, though light of love, had not been manly in protecting the frail ones whom his passions had brought to shame. Shore's wife was not the only woman whom he had loved and ruined. He was said to have left many a son in Cheapside. Men who rejected the tale of Perkin Warbeck being the actual Duke of York, could not help thinking, from his face and figure, that he must have been King Edward's natural son. Such would seem to have been Bacon's view. A mock marriage was not, indeed, beyond Edward's flight; and the Bishop of Bath and Wells may have aided him in some such frolic. That Edward had been guilty of entering into a clandestine marriage, and of keeping it secret, to the peril of his crown, is a story not to be received.

But men who could not see with Gloucester's eyes, soon found that the Duke had a swift and ugly way of freeing himself from lukewarm friends. Lord Hastings felt it first. Pushing forward the young king's coronation, Richard called a council, in which some of the men who knew his soul had seats. They met in the Council chamber, where Lord Hastings, instead of playing into the Duke's hands, spoke up stoutly for the King; on which Gloucester, who had been listening in a passage, rushed into the Council room, tore up his sleeve, showed a withered arm, which he accused Hastings of having caused by impious arts, and asked his councillors what should be done. Words were useless. At a sign from Gloucester, bands of soldiers rushed from the corridor, tore Hastings from the table, dragged him downstairs, and, finding the block on the green out of order, threw him across a beam of wood and hacked off his head.

Then came, stroke on stroke, the crowning of Richard and the murder of his inconvenient kin.

Richard left London for the north while the crime was being done. His instruments had been chosen and his orders given. But the course of murder never quite runs smooth. Brackenbury was at his prayers, when the King's meaning was made known to him in a few sharp words. Finding him on his knees, the royal message was not likely to find him in the mood. He refused his task. The King had ridden so far as Warwick Castle when he heard that Sir John declined his office; and though it was midnight when the rider came in, he slipt from his couch, passed into the guard-room, where Sir James Tyrrell, his master of the horse, lay sleeping on a pallet-bed, and gave a few sure words of instruction to that trusty knight. Tyrrell rode back to London, bearing a royal order that Brackenbury should, for one night only, give up his command, with the keys and passwords. The month was August; the days were hot; and Tyrrell was much oppressed in soul; for murder is not an easy thing at best, and the errand on which he was riding to the Tower was one of the foulest ever known. But he feared the new king even more than he feared the devil and all his fires. Two trusty knaves were at his side; John Dighton and Miles Forrest; fellows on whose strong arms and callous hearts he could count for any deed which the King might bid them do. These men he took down to the Gate house, where the princes lay; and after getting the keys and passes from Brackenbury, he closed the Tower gates, and sent the two ruffians up into the princes' room.

In a few seconds the deed was done. Stealing downstairs, the murderers called their master, who stood watching near the gate, to come up and see that the boys were dead. Tyrrell crept up, by the private door; and, after giving a few orders to his agents, and calling the Tower priest to their help, he rode away from the scene and from London; bearing the dread news to his master, who was still going north towards York.

The two murderers, helped, as it would seem, by the priest, got the bodies downstairs into the gateway; dug a hole near the wall, and threw in the dead, and covered them over with earth and stones. But the new king, whose crimes made him superstitious, sent orders that the priest should bestow his nephews in some more decent place. The priest obeyed; but no one knew (unless it were the King) where he now laid them; and as he died soon after, the secret of their sepulchre passed from the knowledge of living men.

After the battle of Bosworth and the fall of Richard, the new king had no reason to conceal that grave, and after the rising of Perkin Warbeck it became a pressing duty for him to find it and make it known. He could not. Forrest was dead; the priest was dead. Tyrrell and Dighton, though living, and eager to confess their crime, covering themselves with a royal pardon, could not help King Henry to prove, by the very best evidence—their bones—that the princes were not alive. Richard had sent orders for the priest to remove them; that was all they knew; and every apprentice boy in London knew as much. The fact of a first burial, and then a second burial, is stated in the writings ascribed to More, and is mentioned in Shakespeare's play :—

> "The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them,
> But where, to say the truth, I do not know."

As the priest would be likely to inter the princes in consecrated ground, search was made, not only in the open graveyard near St. Peter's, but within the church. To find these relics would have been to render a signal service to King Henry. No effort was spared; but fate was against the search; and as the bodies could not be found, the most cunning princes of Europe affected to believe that Perkin Warbeck the Pretender was King Edward's son.

Two hundred years after the deed was done, the mystery was cleared. In the reign of Charles the Second, when the keep (no longer used as a royal palace) was being filled with state papers, some workmen, in making a new staircase into the royal chapel, found under the old stone steps, hidden close away, and covered with earth, the bones of two boys, which answered in every way to those which had been sought so long. Deep public wonder was excited; full inquiry into all the facts was made; and a report being sent to Charles that these bones were those of the murdered princes, the King gave orders for their removal to a royal sepulchre in Westminster Abbey. The bones thus found now lie in the great chapel built by Henry the Seventh, side by side with some of the most eminent of English kings.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRISON RULES.

"Let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before Thee."

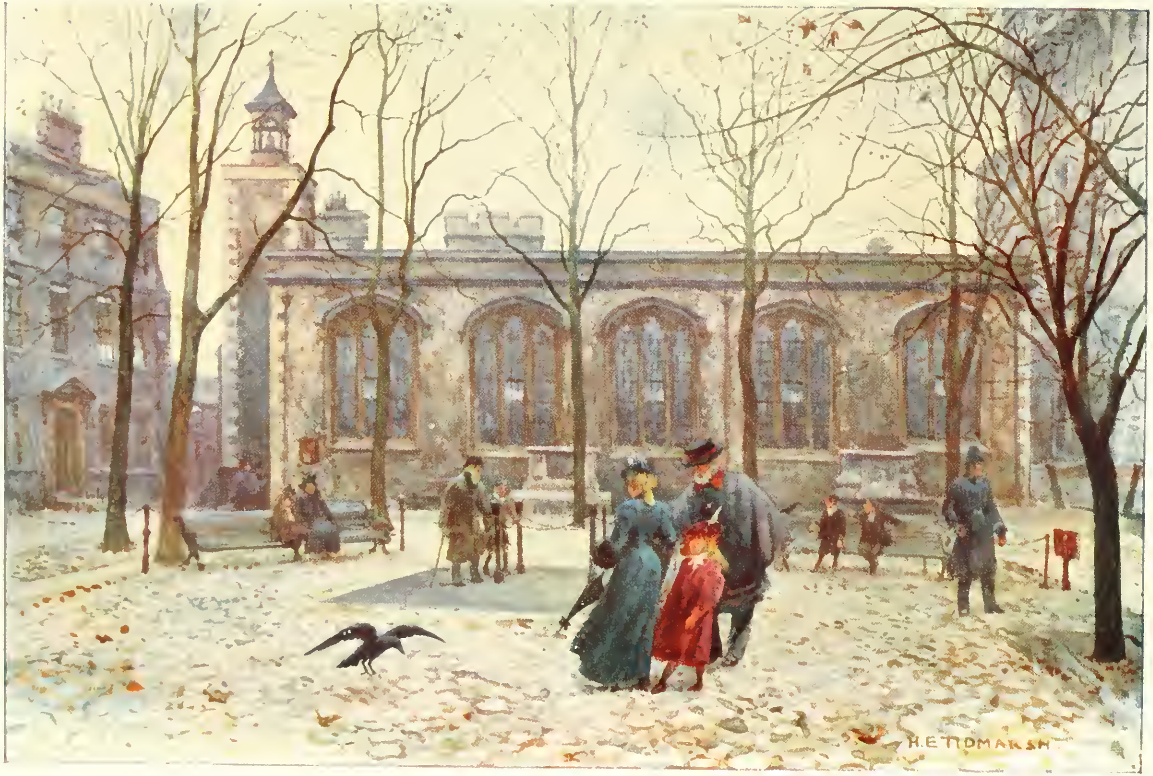
WHAT, in those days, were the rule and order of our first state prison?

The rule was simple, the order strict. In ancient times the government lay with the Constable, who had his official residence on the eastern wall, in Constable tower. This officer was paid in fees; twenty pounds on the committal of a duke, twenty marks on that of an earl, ten pounds on that of a baron, five pounds on that of a knight. A poor man had no right in the Tower at all; the officers sometimes complain that such and such a fellow could not afford to be a prisoner, and ought to be sent away. When a man was committed, the council seized his goods for the king's use, and the Treasury had to pay the Constable for his board and fire. So early as the reign of Richard the Second, the fees were fixed:—for a duke at five marks a week, for an earl at forty shillings, for a baron at twenty shillings, for a knight at ten shillings. A duke's chaplains were allowed six shillings and eightpence a week; his gentlemen the same; his yeomen three shillings and fourpence. All other servants were allowed three shillings and fourpence; all other yeomen one shilling and eightpence. These fees were raised as gold declined in value. In the reign of Edward the Sixth, the Duchess of Somerset, with two gentlewomen and three male servants, cost the Treasury eight pounds a week. In Mary's reign, Lady Jane Grey was allowed eighty shillings a week for diet, with thirteen shillings and fourpence for wood, coal, and candle. Her two gentlewomen cost twenty shillings a week, and her three male servants the same sum. A bishop was treated like a baron. Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, was allowed fifty-three shillings a week for food, with six shillings and eightpence for fire and light. Two servants waited on him, who cost the country ten shillings a week.

The prisoners were cheated by their keepers, most of all in the comforts of fire and candle.

The Constable, always a man of high rank, appointed a Lieutenant, to whom he allowed a stipend of twenty pounds a year, with such small savings as could be made in furniture and food. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, the Lieutenant, who had now become the actual prison warder, had a new house built for his accommodation, in a courtly quarter of the prison, under the Belfry; which house was afterwards known as the Lieutenant's lodgings. Close by his house, on either side, stood two smaller houses for his officers; that to the east, in the garden, became famous in after-times as the prison of Latimer and Raleigh; that to the north, on the green, became famous as the prison of Lady Jane Grey.

In time, the Lieutenant and his officers came to look on the state allowance for a prisoner's maintenance as a perquisite. They expected an offender to pay heavy fees, and to find himself in furniture and diet. Raleigh paid for his food £208 a year; equal to a thousand pounds in the present time. Bare walls, an oaken floor, a grated window, an iron-bound door, were all provided by his country. Chairs, arras, tables, books, plate, fire and victuals, he had to buy for himself, at his own cost, through porters, serving-men, and cheats who lived upon his purse. When he had


H.E. TIDMARSH

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PLACE OF EXECUTION IN FRONT OF ST. PETER'S CHAPEL

bought these articles, they were not his own, except for their immediate use. The rule was, that as a man brought nothing in, he could take nothing out. Whether he died in prison, or left it with a pardon, his goods of every kind were seized for his keeper's use.

How a prisoner fared in his cell may be seen by two examples taken from a heap of records.

The case of Sir Henry Wyat, of Allington Castle, Kent, father of the wit and poet, takes us back to the latter days of the Red and White Roses. Wyat, a Lancastrian in politics, spent not little of his time under watch and ward. The Wyat papers say—"He was imprisoned often; once in a cold and narrow tower, where he had neither bed to lie on, nor clothes sufficient to warm him, nor meat for his mouth. He had starved there had not God, who sent a crow to feed His prophet, sent this His and his country's martyr a cat both to feed and warm him. It was his own relation unto them from whom I had it. A cat came one day down into the dungeon unto him, and as it were offered herself unto him. He was glad of her, laid her in his bosom to warm him, and, by making much of her, won her love. After this she would come every day unto him divers times, and when she could get one bring him a pigeon. He complained to his keeper of his cold and short fare. The answer was, 'he durst not better it.' 'But,' said Sir Henry, 'if I can provide any, will you promise to dress it for me?' 'I may well enough,' said he, the keeper, 'you are safe for that matter;' and being urged again, promised him, and kept his promise, and dressed for him, from time to time, such pigeons as his accator the cat provided for him. Sir Henry Wyat in his prosperity for this would ever make much of cats, as other men will of their spaniels or hounds; and perhaps you shall not find his picture anywhere but, like Sir Christopher Hatton with his dog, with a cat beside him."

One picture of the old knight, with his faithful cat, pigeon in paw, is preserved in the National Portrait Gallery. Wyat was put to the torture, a thing unknown to our law, but well enough known to our judges. Racks, boots, barnacles, thumbscrews, were occasionally used. The barnacles was an instrument fastened to the upper lips of horses to keep them still while they were being bled; and Richard the Third was fond of putting this curb on his enemies. One day, after putting it on Wyat, the King exclaimed in a fit of admiration, "Wyat, why art thou such a fool? Thou servest for moonshine in water. Thy master," meaning Henry of Richmond, "is a beggarly fugitive; forsake him and become mine. Cannot I reward thee? And I swear unto thee I will." To all this the prisoner replied: "If I had first chosen you for my master, thus faithful would I have been to you, if you should have needed it. But the Earl, poor and unhappy though he be, is my master, and no discouragement, no allurement, shall ever drive me from him, by God's grace."

When the wars of the Roses came to an end, Sir Henry found that he had served for something better than moonshine in water; being made a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, a knight banneret, Master of the Jewel house, Treasurer of the King's chamber, and a Privy Councillor; rich enough to buy Allington Castle, one of the noblest piles in Kent; where Lady Wyat, his wife, put the Abbot of Bexley in the stocks for taking liberties with one of her maids; where Sir Henry lived to see his son, Sir Thomas, renowned as a wit, a poet, and a servant of the Queen.

The case of Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk, gives us glimpses of the prison seventy years later, in the reign of Edward the Sixth.

Norfolk was not only the first of English nobles, but the uncle of two queens, and nearly related to the King in blood. He had served his country in the council chamber and at foreign courts; in the fleet and on the field of battle; nay, he had so far won King Henry's confidence as to be named one of his executors during the minority of his son. He was an early reformer, and in the wild rising called the Pilgrimage of Grace he had smitten the Catholics hip and thigh. Yet, when Henry was on his death-bed, rivals and enemies whispered in his ear that Norfolk's eldest son, Lord Surrey, the poet of whose genius we are all so proud, was looking for the hand of Mary, and quartering the arms of Edward the Confessor on his shield. The dying man was alarmed for the public peace. Father and son, seized in the King's name, were lodged, unknown to each other, in the Tower. Surrey, not being a peer of the realm, was tried at Guildhall by a common jury, before whom he pleaded his right to wear the Confessor's arms; a right of usage which he said was sanctioned by the heralds; but the court pronounced this assumption of the king's arms treason, and the brilliant young noble laid his head upon the block. The Peers passed a bill of attainder against the old warrior; a warrant for his execution was signed; but in the night, while the headsmen were sharpening their axe and setting up the block, the King expired. Somerset, the Duke's rival, feared to carry out the warrant; yet Norfolk was kept in prison until King Edward died; and in this interval of quiet endurance there is one letter from him extant, in which he humbly begs to have some books sent to him from a house in Lambeth, saying, very pathetically, that unless he has a book to engage his mind, he cannot keep himself awake, but is always dozing, and yet never able to sleep, nor has he ever done so for a dozen years! Only one servant was allowed to wait upon him; a rare restriction in the case of men of his exalted rank. The Duchess of Somerset had two ladies and three male servants to attend her. Sir Edward Warner, the Lieutenant, made the usual charges for a duke, £22, 18s. 8d. a month; charges which should have covered diet, light, and fire. Yet Norfolk has to beg his good masters for leave to walk by day in the outer chamber of his cell, for the sake of his health, which suffers very much from his close confinement. They can still, he says, lock him up in his narrow cage at night. He craves to be allowed some sheets, to keep him warm in bed.

Such were the comforts of a prison, to the first peer in the realm, at a period when the laws did not pretend to be equal for the great and the obscure. A man of quality had one great advantage; he could not be stretched on the rack and hung by the cord. Cases occur of a baron in one cell urging his follower in another, never to confess, but to stand out like a man; and the poor commoner replying that it is easy for a lord to stand out, since he is only examined by word of mouth; not so easy for a poor wretch, who, unprotected by his quality, has to answer with his thumb under a screw and his limbs on the wheel.

CHAPTER IX.

BEAUCHAMP TOWER.

BEFORE the days of Henry of Agincourt, the keep had ceased to be a common prison, and that function had been transferred to the large and central work on the western wall. This work became known by the names of Beauchamp tower and Cobham tower; names which take us back to Thomas de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and Sir John Oldcastle, the Good Lord Cobham.

This tower consists of three floors; mainly of three large rooms, and a winding stair; a room on the green, which was used by keepers and servants; a middle room, used as a prison, for what may be called the second class of great offenders; an uppermost room for the servants of great lords and for prisoners of inferior rank.

The tenant to whom these chambers owe their first renown and lasting name, was a popular idol, Thomas de Beauchamp, son of that Earl of Warwick, who had swept through the lines of Crecy and Poictiers. Beauchamp was of milder tastes and more popular manners than his sire; a friend of the good Duke of Gloucester, Thomas of Woodstock; a builder, a gardener, a student; a man who found more happiness in his park and his oratory than in courts and camps. When the House of Commons met to appoint a governor to the young king, Richard of Bordeaux, they fixed on Beauchamp as the man best gifted for so great a charge. It was a thankless office. Richard proved to be a boy at once proud and base; fond of pomp and show; attached to low persons and degrading pleasures. For the King's own good, Gloucester and Beauchamp put their strength together, and, being joined by Arundel, Mortimer, and other great barons, marched on London, seized the rapacious Simon Burley, and, after an open trial, put this unpopular minion of the King to death. All honest men rejoiced in Burley's fall; but Richard was roused to anger; and for many years he nursed a bitter heart, masked by a smiling face, against the men who had done him this true service. In fact, the arrest of Burley was not their sole offence. They wished to keep him in the open path of law; while he and his flatterers were bent on ruling in a fashion of their own. Hence they acquired the name of "sound advisers" to the court.

For some years, Richard had to wait and grow; but when he came of age, he took the reins into his hands, dismissing his wise governor from his council, and banishing him into the midland shires.

Beauchamp repaired to Warwick Castle, where he found sweet employment for his genius, in building towers, in strengthening walls, in planting trees. Some of his noble work remains in evidence of his taste and skill; among other things, Guy's tower, on the north-east corner of the castle, and the nave of St. Mary's Church in the town.

But even in the country, men so popular as the Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Warwick were not to be endured by a prince who dreamt of seizing all the powers of the realm into his puny hands. At length his occasion came, and he struck his blow. Arundel was the first to fall; Beauchamp followed next; but they only fell when the liberties of England were destroyed, when parliaments were swept away, and the King, with the advice of eight lords and three commoners only, assumed the power of making all future laws for the government of his realm. It was a vast usurpation, and the men who became its victims were regarded as martyrs in a sacred cause.

The barons seized by the King were taken by perfidious arts. Lord Arundel was carried by his brother, the Lord Primate, to the King's closet, whence he was hurried to the Isle of Wight. Beauchamp was caught as he was leaving the royal table. The weak prince, who piqued himself on his guile, invited the great and popular Earl to dine with him, and on his arrival treated him with distinguished favour, sitting at the same board, and calling him his very good lord. A stranger who stood by would have supposed Beauchamp higher in grace than ever; but the King's servants knew their master; and were not surprised, on quitting the banquet, to find him a prisoner in the marshal's hands. In a few days, Beauchamp was given in charge to Ralph Lord Nevill, of Raby, Constable of the Tower, by whom he was lodged in the apartment to which he has bequeathed his name.

Thomas of Woodstock, known as the Good Duke of Gloucester, was taken next, at his castle of Plasley, near Dunmow, by an ingenious wile. Richard set out from London, dressed as for a royal hunt; rode on to Havering Park, where dinner had been prepared for him; and after eating a merry meal, got on his horse, and went on to Plasley, the Duke's residence, with a few gentlemen only in his train. It was five o'clock of a summer afternoon when they clattered into the open court; the Duke, who had just supped, led down the Duchess and his children to the courtyard to give his nephew welcome. Richard went into the house, and sat at table; but after a few minutes, he cried, "Fair uncle, cause you some five or six horses to be brought, and let us away to London, where we need your counsels." Uncle and nephew descended into the yard, leapt to their horses, and rode away; the

King keeping in front, at a sharp trot, until they came upon an ambush of armed men, who seized the Duke's bridle and held him fast. Gloucester shouted to his nephew to come back; but the King rode forward, taking no heed of the Duke's cries, until he reached the Tower and threw himself on his couch. The Duke, brought up to London by his guards, was thrust on board a ship, carried over to Calais, and lodged in the castle of that town, from which he was never to escape with life.

Arundel was tried, condemned, and executed. Mortimer escaped from his pursuers into the wilds of Ulster, where he dwelt in safety with the Irish kernes.

From his cell on the west wall, Beauchamp was carried by Lord Nevill and his javelin men to the House of Peers, where John of Gaunt informed him that he stood accused by Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Rutland, of having, in times long past, committed divers crimes and offences against his lord the king. Beauchamp replied, that for these alleged offences he had received a pardon under the Great Seal. Of course this plea was final. But Sir John Clopton, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, declared that this pardon under the Great Seal would not serve his turn, since the King, for good and wise reasons, had, on the prayer of his faithful Parliament, repealed that instrument as void and of no effect. Seeing that the ancient law and franchise of the realm were set at naught, the Earl could do nothing else than put his cause in the hands of God and his Peers.

Rutland made the charge against him in two main parts. In the first part, he accused Beauchamp of high treason in having raised an armed force against the King's authority and crown; in the second part, in having arrested, tried, and executed Sir Simon Burley, without the King's consent, to the great scandal of his royal justice. Beauchamp knew they would condemn him; though he may have doubted whether they would dare to defy the City by sending him to the block. He pleaded guilty to the charge. In a version of his trial, which was published by the court, he is said to have confessed his faults with many tears; urging that he felt the wickedness of what he had done, and that his only hope was in the King's grace and mercy. Gaunt pronounced the same sentence as on Arundel; that he should be hanged, drawn, and quartered; that his name should be erased from the roll of Peers; that all his castles, manors, and estates, should revert to the Crown. With the weight of this sentence on his head, he was taken back to the Tower, where Lord Nevill replaced him in his cell until his majesty's pleasure should be further known.

Richard, covered with the odium of his uncle's murder, could not bring his pen to sign the warrant for Beauchamp's death. The Earl had a great following, and his prison was a centre of public emotion, like that of Raleigh in a later reign. To get rid of these sympathies, he was sent away to the Isle of Man, a prisoner for life; but that small islet in the Irish Sea was found to be no safe jail for so great a man; and before the year ran out he was brought back to London and lodged once more under Nevill's eye. Here he remained for two years longer; when the star of Henry of Bolingbroke rising in the west, he was set at liberty, purged in honour, and restored to his rank and fortune.

His ashes lie at Warwick, in the noble church which he had built in the days of his happy exile from the court.

CHAPTER X.

THE GOOD LORD COBHAM.

OLDCASTLE DIED A MARTYR." So runs the epilogue to Shakespeare's Second Part of King Henry the Fourth. "Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man!"

In the first draft of Shakespeare's play the mighty piece of flesh, now known to all men as Sir John Falstaff, was presented to a Blackfriars' audience under the name of Sir John Oldcastle. Why was such a name adopted for our great buffoon? Why, after having been adopted, was it changed? Why, above all, is Oldcastle first presented by the poet as a buffoon, and afterwards proclaimed a martyr?

These questions hang on a story which unfolds itself in the Beauchamp tower.

Sir John Oldcastle lived, when his young friend, Harry of Monmouth, was a roguish lad, at Couling Castle, close by Gad's Hill, on the great Kent road. Besides being a good soldier, a sage councillor, and a courteous gentleman, Oldcastle was a pupil of Wycliffe, a receiver of what was called the New Light. A contemner of monks and friars, he was a friend of the reigning king, and of the graceless prince. He had fought with equal credit in the French wars and in the Welsh wars; but his fame was not confined to the court and camp. Rumour linked his name with some of the pranks of madcap Hal. We know that he lived near Gad's Hill, that he built a new bridge at Rochester, and founded in that city a house for the maintenance of three poor clerks; but we know nothing to suggest the pranks on Gad's Hill, or the orgies in Eastcheap. A high, swift sort of man; full of fight, keen of tongue, kind to the poor, impatient with the proud; a man of tough English fibre, and of old English spirit; such was the young knight who wedded Joan, heiress of the old line of Cobham, in whose right he held Couling Castle; sitting in the House of Peers as Lord Cobham; a name by which he was not less widely known and dearly loved than by his own. Poor and pious people everywhere called him the "Good Lord Cobham."

Between this popular layman and his neighbour, Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, bad feeling had grown up. Oldcastle hated monks; and Arundel was a patron of monks. Oldcastle loved the frank old English ways, while Arundel was fired with the new Spanish rage for converting souls. Oldcastle stood out for free inquiry; Arundel was the chief author of our atrocious act for burning heretics.

Bent on crushing the Lollard preachers, Arundel found his neighbour of Couling Castle in the way; for Sir John not only went to hear these Lollards preach, but lodged them in his house, and defended them by his power. Nay, Sir John had set his face against the new policy, introduced by Arundel, of burning men alive. This burning of men alive was a new thing in the land; and although it had then been made lawful, it was known to be a foreign device, not justified from the Word of God. Sir John, a man quick of temper and shrewd of tongue, let those prelates and friars who had got the law passed know what he thought of them.

Arundel drew up a charge against Sir John, on the score of his opposition to Holy Church, which, backed by some priests and monks, he laid before the King.

Henry, who did not want to quarrel with his friend, replied that he would himself speak with Sir John, and show him the error of his way. Nothing came of this pause. Henry talked to Sir John; but Oldcastle was a learned clerk, which Henry was not; and, after much writing and talking on the point, the King, at once puzzled and vexed over a coil which his wit could not smooth, left the swordsman and the gownsman to fight their fight.

Arundel cited Oldcastle to appear at Canterbury and purge his fame. Oldcastle replied by manning the walls and strengthening the gates of Couling Castle; since the Lord Primate, a baron of the realm, no less than a prince of the Church, was likely enough, on his second citation, to send archers and pikemen to enforce his will. But the crafty Primate took a surer way. He caused John Butler, one of the King's servants, to go with his own man to Couling, where he was challenged by the guard, and refused admission within the gates. Butler had no business there; but the fact of his being sent away was adroitly presented to the King as an act of disloyalty on the part of Sir John. Quick in temper, Henry gave orders to arrest his friend, who was seized by a royal messenger, and given in keeping to Sir Robert Morley, then Lieutenant of the Tower.

Sir Robert lodged the King's old friend in the Earl of Warwick's chamber; then the most stately and commodious prison in his charge; the Lieutenant's house not being erected until the reign of Henry the Eighth.

In this chamber, which people began at once to call Cobham tower (a name which clings to it still), he was visited by his enemies, the monks and friars, who put him through his catechism, and got logically cudgelled for their pains. But Arundel felt that he had his foe in the toils. A prisoner of the Church had then no friends; and a man on whom Henry frowned was not likely to meet with mercy from a bench of priests. A synod met on his case in St. Paul's, which Arundel adjourned to an obscure Dominican convent on Ludgate Hill. When Oldcastle was brought to this convent by Sir Robert Morley, he found among his judges, over whom the Primate sat in state, the priors of the Augustine and Carmelite friars. In fact, the denouncer of monkish abuses was now to be tried for his life by a board of monks.

Oldcastle's answers to his accusers struck the folk who afterwards heard of them like steel on flint. Wycliffe himself had never put the new lore in a finer light. He declared that the Bible was his rule of faith; that every man had a right to the sacred guide; that the bread and wine were typical, but not actual, body and blood of Christ. "What!" cried one of the judges; "this is flat heresy." "St. Paul, the Apostle," answered Sir John, "was as wise as you be now and more godly learned: and *he* wrote to the Corinthians, 'The bread which we brake, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?'" He threw out his opinions freely. "By our Lady," cried the Primate, "there shall be no such preaching within my diocese and jurisdiction—if I may know it." The synod, acting on the new Spanish law, condemned Sir John to be burnt with fire until he died.

When that sentence of the court was read, and the culprit was asked what he had to say, he stood up, and spake these memorable words:

"Ye judge the body, which is but a wretched thing, yet am I certain and sure that ye can do no harm to my soul. He who created that, will of His own mercy and promise save it. As to these articles I will stand to them, even to the very death—by the grace of my eternal God."

Morley led him back from the Dominican convent to the Beauchamp tower, followed by the cries and tears of a whole city, in which his words were repeated from mouth to mouth. A paper in which he wrote down the points of his belief was read in every gateway, as Sir John Oldcastle's creed. In his fresh confinement, under sentence of death by fire, he heard from friends of the good cause, that reports were being spread abroad of his having changed his mind since his condemnation. To meet these slanders, and to edify the pious, he sent out from Beauchamp tower a paper in the following words :

"Forasmuch as Sir John Oldcastle, knight and Lord Cobham, is untruly convicted and imprisoned, falsely reported, and slandered among the common people by his adversaries, that he should otherwise both feel and speak of the sacraments of the Church, and especially of the blessed sacraments of the altar, than was written in the confession of his belief, which was indicted and taken to the clergy, and so set up in divers open places in the city of London, known be it here to all the world that he never since varied in any point."

The paper was posted by his friends on church-doors, on blank walls, and on the city gates. But this good service was not all that could be done for him. Four weeks after his sentence had been read at Paul's Cross, William Fisher, dealer in skins, and a band of resolute citizens came down to the fortress on a dark October night, the vigil of St. Simon and St. Jude, forced their way into Beauchamp tower, drew out the popular hero, got away from the gates without being pursued, and carried him in safety to his town house in Smithfield.

Henry took no active steps against the escaped heretic, who remained for nearly three months in his town house, safe in the armed city against all that could be done by monks and friars. But Arundel was not a man to slacken his grip on an enemy's throat. Of himself he could do nothing against a peer so strong in popular support. Only the King could cope with

Cobham. Now, Henry would never stir against a brave soldier, at the suit of a turbulent priest, unless some danger should appear to threaten his crown and life. Then, indeed, the Primate knew that his passion would be fierce and his movement swift. How could an appearance of danger be brought about? No man then living had enjoyed a longer experience than Arundel in popular tumults, in civil war, in the deposition of kings. He knew the art of goading the commons into discontent, and turning their discontent to his own account. Even the great place which he held in the Church had been won as a gambler wins his stake, by a lucky chance.

The Lollards helped him. Either prompted by cunning spies, or moved by reckless counsellors, the men who shared the new light resolved on making a grand display of strength. They spoke of holding a meeting in St. Giles's Fields; they said their General, as they called Sir John, would appear amongst them; and they promised to muster at his call a hundred thousand strong. Such a meeting of the commons, in a field near London, was not to Henry's mind, and his Christmas revels in the country were troubled by the spectre of this coming Lollard day.

Arundel seized his chance. The King was away at Eltham, keeping the festival of his faith, when the Lord Primate sent him word that an army of fanatics was about to encamp in front of Newgate; that these pestilent fellows meant to pull down kings and bishops, and set up a devil's commonwealth, with the heretic, Sir John Oldcastle, as regent of his realm. Henry flushed into rage; yet even in his fury he acted like a master of events. No one read alarm upon his brow. The palace revels were kept up; but on Twelfth Night coming, his horse was brought to the door, and he rode away towards London. If the captain who had smitten Burgundy were in the field, with a hundred thousand commoners at his back, the task before him might be rough and sharp. So he called his barons to his side, shut up the City gates, stuck a white cross on his banner, such as knights put on who were going to die for Holy Church, sallied from the city before it was yet dawn, marched into St. Giles's Fields, and occupied all the lanes. The Lollards were completely caught. As the bands came in from the country, they were seized and brought before the King. "What seek ye?" was the sharp question. "We go to meet our General," said the foremost, scarcely knowing to whom he spake. "Who is your General?" "Who is our General! Who should he be save the Good Lord Cobham?"

Oldcastle was proclaimed; a thousand marks set on his head; and privilege offered to the city that should yield him bound to the King. All these rewards were cried in vain. Leaving his house in Smithfield, he roamed about the country; now in Wales, anon near London, afterwards in Kent; in every place hearing of the thousand marks, and of the privilege to be won by his arrest; finding, in every shire, men and women eager to brave ruin and death in his defence. As a man cast out from the Church, it was a mortal sin to feed and shelter him. Every monk whom he met was a spy; every priest whom he saw was a judge; yet for more than four years he defied the united powers of Church and Crown; sheltered from pursuit by poor folk whom he had taught, and by whom he was madly loved.

Once he was near being taken. Lodging in a farmhouse near St. Albans, on a manor belonging to the abbey, he was seen by some of the abbot's men, who quickly ran to inform their lord, and came back to the farm with a force to arrest him in his bed.

Oldcastle was got away; but his books were seized; and some of his stout defenders, who were taken by the abbot's men, were hung as a warning to the rest. On the books being opened they were found to be religious works; but the abbot of St. Albans was shocked to see that the heads of all the saints had been either torn out or defaced.

William Fisher, the dealer in skins, who had conducted Oldcastle's rescue from the Tower, was seized in his house, and tried at Newgate before Nicholas Wotton, and three other judges, on a charge of breaking into the Tower, and carrying off the King's prisoner. Fisher, found guilty by a picked jury, was sentenced by Wotton to be hung at Tyburn, to have his neck chopped through, to have his head spiked, and exposed on London Bridge.

After a chase of more than four years, the friars, who could not persuade the commons to betray Sir John, were base enough to buy him from a Welsh fellow named Powis; a wretch of some local weight, who had won the friendship of Oldcastle by adopting his views about the monkish order and the Bread and Wine. The friars who got hold of Powis plied him with money to betray his master, until his virtue finally gave way, and he consented to act the part of Judas, on receipt of such wages as Judas got. He came upon Oldcastle by surprise, accosted him as a friend, and took him prisoner by a desperate fight.

Wounded and weak, Sir John was brought to the Tower; and, the King being absent in France, the clergy gave themselves no trouble about a second trial; but, taking the old sentence of death to be sufficient, they sent him to the gallows and the stake; to the first as a traitor against his King; to the second as an apostate from his Church. He was burnt in St. Giles's Fields, on the spot where King Henry had caught and hung the poor Lollard bands. Such is the story of a gallant warrior, a pious gentleman, and a faithful knight.

Now, what is there in such a man to suggest the idea of Falstaff—a braggart, a coward, a lecher, a thief?

Shakespeare was not the first to put this insult on

Sir John. When the young poet came to London, he found the play-writers using the name of Oldcastle as synonymous with braggart, buffoon, and clown. As Fuller says, Sir John Oldcastle was the make-sport in old plays for a coward. Finding the name current (just as a comic writer finds Pantaloon—a degradation of one of the noblest Italian names—on our modern stage) Shakespeare adopted it in his play.

This false Sir John was the creation of those monks and friars against whom the true Sir John had fought his manly fight. Those friars composed our early plays; those friars conducted our early dumb shows; in many of which the first great heretic ever burned in England was a figure. Those friars would naturally gift their assailant with the ugliest vices—for how could an enemy of friars be gallant, young, and pious? In this degraded form, the name of Oldcastle was handed down from fair to fair, from inn-yard to inn-yard, until it took immortal shape on Shakespeare's stage.

Now comes a personal query, the significance of which will not be overlooked by men who wish to learn what they can of Shakespeare's life.

Why, after giving to the Oldcastle tradition that immortal shape, did Shakespeare change the name of his buffoon to Falstaff, and separate himself for ever from the party of abuse?

The point is very curious. Some motive of unusual strength must have come into play before such a course could have been taken by the poet. It is not the change of a name, but of a state of mind. For Shakespeare is not content with striking out the name of Oldcastle and writing down that of Falstaff. He does more—much more—something beyond example in his works—*He makes a confession of his faith.*

In his own person, as poet and as man, he proclaims from the stage—

OLDCASTLE DIED A MARTYR!

That was a sentiment which Raleigh might have held, which Cartwright would have expressed. It was the thought for which Weever was then struggling in his "Poetical Life of Sir John Oldcastle;" for which James, the friend of Jonson, if not of Shakespeare, was compiling his "Defence of the noble knight and martyr, Sir John Oldcastle."

The occurrence of such a proclamation suggests that, between the first production of "Henry the Fourth" and the date of his printed quarto, Shakespeare changed his way of looking at the old heroes of English thought.

In the year 1600, a play was printed in London with the title, "The First Part of the True and Honourable History of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle, the Good Lord Cobham." The title-page bore Shakespeare's name. "Sir John Oldcastle" is now regarded by every one as a play from other pens; in fact, it is known to have been written by three of Shakespeare's fellow-playwrights; but many good critics think the poet may have written some of the lines and edited the work. This drama was a protest against the wrong which had been done to Oldcastle on the stage by Shakespeare. The prologue said:—

> "It is no pampered glutton we present,
> Nor aged counsellor to youthful sin;
> But one whose virtue shone above the rest,
> A valiant martyr and a virtuous peer."

These lines are thought to be Shakespeare's own. They are in his vein, and they repeat the declaration which he had already made.

OLDCASTLE DIED A MARTYR!

The man who wrote that confession in the days of Archbishop Whitgift was a Puritan in faith.

CHAPTER XI.

KING AND CARDINAL.

WHEN the Wars of the Roses came to an end, the royal stronghold ceased to be a general prison, and opened its gates to few save men of the highest class. Down to the Tudor times, offenders of rank had been lodged in the Banqueting hall, while those of inferior state had been flung into Little Ease. But poetry and art were touching men's souls into softness, and a rival in politics was no longer regarded as a wretch unworthy to live in the light of heaven.

Under the Belfry, in the south-west corner of the royal ward, King Henry the Eighth built a Lieutenant's house; a house of many chambers; opening into the lower and upper rooms of the Belfry; and having a free passage, on one side into the Garden tower, on the other side into the Beauchamp tower. This house was flanked by two smaller buildings; warders' houses, one under the west wall, another under the south wall. The latter, standing in the Lieutenant's garden, was called the Garden house. None of these places were built as prisons; and none were used as such under Henry the Eighth, except the Belfry and the Beauchamp tower.

A bare stone vault, pierced for archers and balisters, who from this high post could sweep the outer works with shaft and bolt: such is that upper chamber of the

Belfry, which is known in old records as the Strong Room.

Two points about this room, beyond the fact of its amazing strength, soon catch the eye. In the first place, it has no stairs; no entrance from below; no passage into the outer world, except through the Lieutenant's house; in the second place, it is provided with a private closet, called in old English a "homely place."

The man who made the Strong Room famous, not by his age, his eminence, and his sufferings only, but by his gaiety, his humour, and his stoutness of spirit, was John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Cardinal in Rome.

Cardinal Fisher's story takes one back to an age when England was becoming what Spain has always been,—a country governed in a high degree, not by the nobler spirits of her church, but by ignorant monks and superstitious nuns. The offence by which Fisher fell was the half smiling, half earnest siding which he took with Elizabeth Barton, the Maid of Kent; a crazy young girl, subject to fits and ravings, who lifted up her voice against the divorce of Catharine and the marriage of Queen Anne. The Maid sent her prophecies and visions to both Wolsey and the King. Henry was only moved to mirth. "Why," said he, in effect, to Cromwell, "these are rhymes, and very bad rhymes; this is no angel's work; but such as a silly woman might do of her own poor wit." Afterwards he read her rhymes in a darker spirit; but this change of humour was wrought in his mind by the Maid herself.

The Spanish party in the Church, prone to accept irregular aid from Heaven, soon saw the use which might be made of this crazy girl. Placing her in a convent, they gave her five monks of Christ Church, of whom Father Bocking was the chief, to be her guides and secretaries. Under their eyes, the Nun made startling progress in divine lore; speaking words which priests and prelates who wished them to be true, received with a thankful heart. Wolsey was puzzled by the Maid; but Wolsey was then trying to play two games. Fisher wept with joy; but Fisher agreed with what Father Bocking was making his Nun put forth. Many of her sayings were dark enough; but when need arose for plainness, she could be curt as a Hebrew seer. She declared that Heaven was against the divorce. She called on the King to abandon his great design. She admonished him, as he loved his soul, to put Anne away and take Catharine back. These words from the Maid of Kent were scattered through the land; copies being sent from Christ Church through the province of Canterbury, and the mendicant friars employed to report them in every village ale-house, and in every convent-yard from the Medway to the Tweed.

One day, under Father Bocking's lead, the poor Nun overshot her mark, and brought down ruin on her master and herself. In true Spanish style, she sent a message to the King, not only denouncing his divorce, but declaring that if he put Catharine away, he would die in seven months, when his daughter Mary, though degraded to the rank of bastard, would ascend his throne.

Such a threat was no theme for mirth. Henry swept the whole brood of darkness—Nun, priest, friar, doctor—into the Tower, on their way to Tyburn. The poor girl confessed with her last breath that she was a simple woman, who had only done what the fathers told her to do for the love of God and the service of Holy Church.

A room over Cold-harbour gateway, in which the poor Maid was lodged, was for many years known as the Nun's bower.

Fisher, it is not denied, played fast and loose with the Maid of Kent; as in recent days we have seen great prelates coquet with nuns, apparently not more worthy of their trust. He hoped that good would come of her delusions; most of all, he fancied that the King, having waited six long years for Anne, might be frightened into waiting a few years more, after which it would be easier for him to change his mind. In some such hope the prelate took the Maid's part, encouraging her visions, stirring up public curiosity about her, implying that her speeches came from God.

When charged with aiding and abetting treason, he replied that he had given his ear to the impostor only on fair grounds, seeing cause for the favour he had shown to her in facts which had come to him on good report. With biting malice, Cromwell told him that the outward facts had not weighed with him one jot. "My lord," said Cromwell, not in these words, but to this purport, "you liked the stuff she uttered, and you pretended to believe it true because you wished it true."

Of the treason of Father Bocking and the Holy Maid, no man can feel a doubt; for theirs was a simple act; imagining and compassing the King's death in a way which brought them under judgment of the law. Fisher's crime was far less clear; and many men regard him, not without grounds, as having been made a martyr to his faith. The Cardinal's hat took off the Bishop's head.

Cardinal Fisher, eighty years old, was seized as a plotter, tried for his offence, thrust into a barge, and pulled down the Thames. When his boat slipped under the archway of the Water-gate, he toddled on shore, and turning to the crowd of guards and oarsmen about him, said, "As they have left me nothing else to give you, I bestow on you my hearty thanks." Some of the rough fellows smiled, though they must have felt that hearty thanks from a good old man who was about to die could do them no harm. Lodged in the Strong Room he suffered much from chill and damp. The Belfry not only stood above the ditch, but lay open to the east wind and to the river fog. Fisher told Cromwell, in piteous letters, that he was left without clothing to keep his body warm. Yet the fine old prelate never lost either his stoutness of heart or his quick sense of humour. One day, when it was bruited about the Tower that he was to suffer death, his cook brought up no dinner to the Strong Room. "How is this?" asked the prelate, when he saw the man.—"Sir," said the cook, "it was commonly talked of in the town that you should die, and therefore I thought it vain to dress anything for you."—"Well," said the bishop, "for all that report thou seest me still alive; therefore, whatever news thou shalt hear of me, make ready my dinner, and if thou see me dead when thou comest, eat it thyself."

Henry and Cromwell would have spared his life, had they seen their way. But Fisher would not help them; neither would his friends help them. First and last, he was a member of the Italian Church, and no thought for his country could for one moment move him to desert the cause of that Church. Even while he was lying in the Strong Room of the Belfry he sent secret messages to the monks at Sion, hostile to Queen Anne. He kept up a warm correspondence with Rome, and Paul the Third chose that unhappy time to send him, against the express command of Henry, a cardinal's hat. On hearing of this hat being on the way from Rome, the King exclaimed, "'Fore God, then, he shall wear it on his shoulders."

The death-warrant reached the Tower at midnight, and the Lieutenant, Sir Edmund Walsingham, went into the Belfry at five o'clock, to let the Cardinal know his fate. "You bring me no great news," said Fisher; "I have long looked for this message. At what hour must I die?"—"At nine," said Walsingham.—"And what is the hour now?"—"Five," answered the Lieutenant. It was June, and of course broad daylight, even in the Strong Room, at five o'clock.—"Well, then, by your patience, let me sleep an hour or two; for I have slept very little." Walsingham left the

Cardinal, who slept until seven, when he rose and put on his finest suit. On his servant wondering why he dressed so bravely, the old man answered, "Dost thou not mark, man, that this is our marriage day?"

Taking a New Testament in his hands, he walked from the Strong Room, through Walsingham's house and the Bye-ward gate to Tower Hill; a vast crowd pressing round him, some of whom could see his lips moving in prayer, and hear the words issuing from his mouth. As he gazed on the closed Gospel in his hand, he prayed the Lord that he might find in it some special strength in that mortal hour; and as he prayed for this strength, he paused in his walk, opened the sacred volume, and read the passage on which his eye first fell—"This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Comforted by these words, he went lightly on, mounting up the steep hill, repeating, "This is life eternal," until he came to the scaffold, where he spoke a few words to the people, and laid his white head upon the block.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE.

IN the hot war which the new learning had to wage against the ancient Church—a war of life and death — a war which, under new names, and with a new line of battle, carried forward the great feud of the Red rose against the White; the Beauchamp tower was choked for many reigns with those who on either side went down in that pitiless fight.

Some of these men wrote records of their passage on these walls; not men of the first rank always; not the prime leaders in bloody fields, but mostly their companions in defeat—men who in happier days would have pricked their names into the stones of the Colosseum and the Great Pyramid. Much true history is graven on these walls; for even though the tablets may have been wrought by men of the second rank, the chiefs, no doubt, stood by while the artists toiled. The inner eye may catch in yon deep recess, by the window-sill, the figure of some spent hero, scarred from either Flodden Field or Nevill's Cross, standing apart from his fellows, dumb with pride, and gazing with scorn and pity on such work.

One of the early groups contains the names of three men who fell into trouble through that wild passage in our contest with the Italian Church called the Pilgrimage of Grace.

Cut into the wall as with a sword we read :

SARO: FIDELI:
INGGRAM PERCY
1537.

The author of this record was Sir Ingram Percy, third son of Algernon, fifth Earl of Northumberland ; a younger brother of Henry the Unthrifty, once a lover of Anne Boleyn ; and of Sir Thomas Percy, the dashing knight who bore the banner of St. Cuthbert on the Don.

Also cut into the wall we read :

WILLIAM: BELMALAR.

And in another place :

RAVLEF BULMAR
1537.

Sir William and Sir Ralph Bulmer (the name was spelt in a dozen ways) were Border chiefs. The head of their house was that stout Sir William, a cousin to Lord Dacre of the North, who had served on the Duke of Richmond's council, and held the Lord Warden's commission as Lieutenant of the Eastern March. Stout Sir William Bulmer had two sons, John and William ; men who followed the profession of arms, as that profession was understood in the Border lands. The old knight had given his boys a start in life, by getting them knighted, and put in a way to earn their bread. Sir John, the elder, had been sent to the Irish Pale ; Sir William, the younger, had got the command of Norham Castle, a fortress on the great north road. The King's favour had descended to the son and to the son's son. Sir Ralph, a son of Sir John, was made an officer on the Border, with a company of fifty mounted men.

Elsewhere on the wall we read :

ADAM: SEDBAR
ABBAS: JOREVALL
1537.

Adam Sedburgh was the last reigning Abbot of the great Yorkshire monastery of Jervaulx (pronounced Gerviss) in the north riding; a monastery which was famous for its beauty even in the shire of Bolton and Fountains, and which is still gratefully remembered in the county for having beaten the whole world in two great Yorkshire arts—the breeding of horses and the making of cheese.

These men bore a part in the Pilgrimage of Grace. The names of Robert Aske, Lord Darcy, and Sir Robert Constable, are not found on these walls; neither are those of William Thirske, Abbot of Fountains, Sir Thomas Percy, Sir John Bulmer, and Madge Cheyne, the wild fanatic who is sometimes described as Sir John's paramour, sometimes as his wife. All these personages were brought into the Tower; but they passed through it and left no sign.

The Pilgrimage of Grace was a rising in the rude northern shires against the reforming King, Council, and House of Commons, in favour of the Spanish princess and the Roman Church; a movement set on foot by idle speeches from Lord Darcy of Darcy, Lord Dacre of the North, and other great barons; but which passed out of their cautious hands into those of ignorant clods, and hardly less ignorant country squires; men who stood by their priests and friars, and who, had their strength been equal to their will, would have thrown down their country at the feet of Spain.

The divorce of Queen Catharine and the bull of Paul the Third had produced among the lower ranks in these northern shires a ferment for which the men of Kent and Essex were unprepared. In the home counties, opinion was with the King. In London, and in all the provinces lying near London, the creed and the cause of Spain had fallen at a word—had fallen at once, and for ever; the decrees which were to frame a true English order in the family and in the Church, having been issued by the commons long before they were put into legal phrase by Parliament and King. Not so in the north. The partition of England into two church provinces was in the reign of Henry the Eighth but echo to an actual fact. The Trent was like the Tweed; a border line between counties jealous of each other; counties apt to fall out, and when they fell out, to fight. The two provinces had a different custom, in some things a different law. York was a great capital; Yorkshiremen spoke with contempt of the city on the Thames; and most men living beyond the Trent thought shame of the King for not holding his Court and Parliament in York. Yet, in every point of culture and civility, the northern shires were a century behind those of the south and west. All that made England great, all that was helping to make her free, was found in that reign, not on the Humber and the Tyne, but on the Severn and the Thames. The thinkers who were moulding her mind, the poets who were fixing her speech, the politicians who were shaping her laws, were men of the southern race. Below the Trent, the peasant was better clothed, the gentlemen were better served, the parson was better read, than their fellows above that stream; and any fight for sway between north and south was in fact a conflict of the brooding darkness against the growing light.

Those silent changes in the state of public thought which made the first great acts of the reforming council —the separation from Spain and Rome, the re-establishment of an English Church, the suppression of monks and friars,—so welcome in the south, had no true counterpart in the shires beyond the Trent. In these counties there was hardly any public thought to change. Men had forgotten the old English Church. They saw few travellers and read no books. They roamed through their native dales from youth to age; loud of oath, and fierce in fight; proud of their dogs, their horses, and their wives; ready for either a bout of sticks or a bout of ale; but chained to one place, at feud with the world, dependent on the wandering friars, with never a thought in their great strong heads. Coarse in manner and rude in speech, they were not so shocked as southerners by the immoralities of their spiritual guides. They owed a good deal to monks, and they had much to learn from priests. In an age when few men could read and cipher, it was a benefit to the grazier to have a learned man call at his house, who could cast up his tallies and see that he got his own. The friars who dwelt in these dales were perhaps of better and stouter stuff. Certainly the cloisters of Jervaulx had no such evil reputation as the cloisters of St. Augustine. When a Yorkshire man mentioned Jervaulx, he spoke proudly of the fine horses and the good cheese to be found in that abbey. When a Kentish man mentioned St. Augustine's, he spoke bitterly of the insolent Abbot and his dissolute monks. While the laity of Kent were rejoicing over the ruin of St. Augustine's, the friars of Jervaulx were regarded by the laity of York as the peasant's best friends.

Hence, when Darcy of Darcy, and Dacre of the North, gave tongue on the changes being made in London, the common folk took up the tale with a clatter of hoofs and pikes which echoed through the land.

Some old political feeling mingled with the fray. York was still sore on account of Bosworth Field. In the last struggle of the Red and the White Roses, she had gone down in her armour, while the victors on that field had been her masters ever since. She burned to avenge that shame. King Henry, it is true, united in his person the claims of both Lancaster and York; and but for his change of belief and the bull of Pope Paul, no man, however hot for blows, would have dreamed of questioning his right to reign. But he was quarrelling with the Pope. He was tampering with their laws. He was separating them from the universal Church. Under such conditions, it was right to tell him, in no doubtful terms, that his safety lay in harking back, in taking his old wife, in keeping to the ancient lines. If he refused good counsel, the heavens might fall upon his head and leave them free. Should he fight and fail, the settlement made after Bosworth Field could be reversed. Then a Lancastrian prince had taken a White Rose to wife; now a Yorkist prince might marry a Red one. A prince of the line of Edward the Fourth would not be far to seek. There was Courtney, there was Pole; either of whom, by marrying Queen Catharine's daughter, the Princess Mary, would unite the rival houses in a second bond. With either of these princes on the throne, Yorkshire would be satisfied, and religion would be saved.

When the royal decree for putting down monastic houses reached Yorkshire, mobs rose upon the King's commissioners; hooting them from the towns, tearing up their proclamations, and in more than one town clubbing them to death. In place of standing by the law, the gentry looked on in silence. Show of authority was gone. The magistrates fled; the citizens snatched up pike and bill; and the barons, whose foolish chatter had roused this storm, retired to their fortified houses, on pretence of guarding those strongholds for the King. Northumberland lay at Wressil, Darcy at Pomfret. All the Border was in uproar, and no man knew what he ought to do. Then the monks came out and made their game. Fathers sallied forth from the abbeys of Fountains, Jervaulx, Hexham, and Lannercost, calling on the people to rise up in defence of the King and Holy Church. They laid the blame of all evil at Cromwell's door. Cromwell, they said, was putting down convent and abbey in order that he might levy a tax for the King on marriages, births, and deaths. Cromwell was a devil, and the first demand of the saints must be Cromwell's head. This rising must be a Pilgrimage of Grace. The stout Yorkshire lads must march on London; deliver their King from his evil councillors; restore Queen Catharine to his bed and board; hang Cromwell like a dog; revive the religious houses; and see that their father the Pope got his own again. These friars supported their appeals with prophetic tales. The Prior of Maldon told the story of one ancient man, who had said the Church would suffer dole for three years; of another ancient man, who had said the King would be forced to fly from his realm, and on his coming back from beyond sea would be glad to reign over two-thirds of his former land.

These dreamers were going back to the Heptarchy, without going back to the free Saxon Church.

The friars prepared an oath, which they put to every man they met; a pledge to stand by the King and Holy Church. Vast crowds were taking up the cross, and sticking on their breasts the pilgrim's sign; a scroll displaying the five wounds of Christ. But as yet the Catholic host was without a general; the great barons would not descend from their castles into the streets; and the mob, after yelling through twenty courtyards, "A chief! a chief!" began to seize on leaders by force and chance. These louts believed that if they could catch a man and put him to the oath, he would become their own for weal and woe; bound by a compact from which he could never break. More than once, it was proposed in their camp to make a dash into Norfolk, carry off the Duke, Anne Boleyn's uncle, and put him to the oath.

One Robert Aske, a gentleman of middle age, was riding home to London from a hunting-party at his cousin Ellerkar's place in Yorkshire, when he was seized by a band of pilgrims near Appleby, put to the oath, and saluted Captain of the host! The choice seemed droll enough. Aske was a London lawyer, who knew nothing about war, and had never seen a camp. Yet here he was, on a Yorkshire wold, with a general's staff, in the midst of a swarm of men; some of them mounted, most of them armed, all of them hot with passion; clamouring to be led on London in defence of the King and Holy Church.

Aske, thus suddenly armed with power for either good or evil, looked around him. A man of the north, he felt with the louts and churls who had thrust the sword into his hand; but he knew, as a northern man, that for any rising of these commons to have a chance, it must be led by the ancient lords of the soil; by the Percies of Alnwick, by the Darcys of Darcy; not by an unknown commoner like himself. These captains he made up his mind to seek. New men were coming daily into camp; Bulmers, Danbys, Tempests, Moncktons, Gowers; and the great barons, even those who held the King's commission, were supposed to share in the general hope. Why was not Percy in the camp?

Henry Percy, sixth Earl of Northumberland, was the man of highest rank and power then living beyond the Trent. In the antiquity of his line, in the fame of his fathers, in the extent of his possessions, he stood without a rival. Lord of Alnwick, Wressil, Leckinfield, and other strong places, he kept the state and exercised the power of a prince; having his privy council, his lords and grooms of the chamber, his chamberlains, treasurers, purse-bearers, some of which offices were hereditary in gentle houses; together with his dean of the chapel, his singers, his scribes, and no less than ten officiating priests. He was the King's deputy in the north; Warden of the East March and the Middle March; the fountain of all authority in the Border lands. If any man could be made prince of a new kingdom of the north, Percy was that man.

Like his neighbours, Percy had been slow to follow the great changes then going on in London. As yet, the names of Catholic and Protestant had not been heard in Yorkshire. Those who were now in arms for King and Holy Church, had risen in favour of what they thought old ways and things; not knowing that their countrymen in the south had risen in favour of still older ways and things. The Earl took much the same view as his tenants. But Henry was unthrifty; a weak and ailing man, who had never got over his love for Anne Boleyn; and who was mourning in his great house at Wressil, on the Derwent, her starless fate. When Aske and a body of riders dashed into the courtyard of Wressil, shouting, "A Percy, a Percy!" the King's Warden of the Marches slipped into bed, and sent out word that he was sick. The Pilgrims would not take this answer. They wanted a Percy in their camp; Earl Henry if it might be; so that folk could say they were marching under the King's flag, with law and justice on their side. Aske sent fresh messages into the sick-room; either the Earl or his brothers, Sir Thomas and Sir Ingram, he said, must join the camp. Now these young knights were only too quick to obey his call. Henry made a feeble protest; and after they were gone, he revoked the commissions which they held under him as officers in the East and Middle Marches. Catharine, their mother, widow of the fifth Earl, detained them with tears over what she felt would be their doom. She came of a house which had known the Tower and the block too well; her uncle being that Duke of Somerset who was executed by Edward the Fourth; her great-grandsire, that Earl of Warwick who had given his name to Beauchamp tower; but her sons, though they paused for a moment at her warning cries, soon leapt to horse, and clad in flashing steel and flaunting plume rode forward into camp, where the Pilgrims received them with uproarious joy. That shining steel and that dazzling plume were afterwards cited as evidence that they had joined the Pilgrims by deliberate choice; and his fine attire caused one of the Percies to lose his head.

Some thirty thousand Pilgrims of Grace began their march towards London, where they meant to hang Lord Cromwell, and give the Pope his own. York, after short parley with the Captain, opened her gates. On entering the chief northern stronghold, Aske, now master of the country beyond Humber, announced that all monks and nuns who had been driven from their houses should be restored, and that the King's tenants, to whom abbey lands and buildings had been let, should be expelled. Few of the King's tenants waited for his bands to oust them; but leaving, for a time, the fields which they had ploughed, and the granaries which they had stored, they fled for safety beyond the Trent. Aske advanced on Pomfret Castle, the surrender of which by Lord Darcy gave him the command of Barnsdale up to the gates of Doncaster. Darcy, captured at Pomfret, was put to the oath, and hailed a leader; as were also Sir Thomas Percy, Sir Ingram Percy, Sir John Bulmer, and many more; though the rank of Captain still remained with Aske.

At Doncaster bridge the Pilgrims came to a halt; the Duke of Norfolk, a great soldier and an able councillor, the hero of Flodden Field and Wissant Bay, having been sent up north by the King, to seize and hold that passage of the Don. Aske was extremely strong in horse. Sir Thomas Percy, glittering in steel, and bearing St. Cuthbert's banner, was followed by five thousand mounted men. The Borders sent as many more. In all, twelve thousand horsemen waited the signal to advance. The Duke, though his force was weaker in numbers, kept a firm front to the north; waiting for his reserves to come in; negotiating with the chiefs; sending heralds through the towns; tempting Darcy to his side; and operating everywhere for time.

Before his reserves had come up, the campaign was over. The Duke had beaten the lawyer in a game of words, ending in a treaty of peace, which the two parties were left free to understand in a different sense.

The Captain thought he had gained his point; the Duke felt sure that *he* had gained *his* point. In the meantime, the northern men, on laying down their arms, received a king's pardon, and rode off to their several homes. In a few days, the rebels were scattered to the four winds, never to meet again in strength; while the King's forces kept the field, as lawful guardians of the public peace. The Yorkshiremen fancied the King had agreed to govern in their own spirit; to hold a Parliament in York; to receive complaints from his disloyal subjects; to restore the religious houses; to put away Cromwell; and to give back all that he had taken from the Pope.

Thus ended, in delusion and in doubt, the Pilgrimage of Grace. The ruin caused by that rising in the north was yet to come.

CHAPTER XIII.

MADGE CHEYNE.

WHEN the three Bulmer knights, Sir John, Sir William, and Sir Ralph, rode into the Pilgrim camp, they brought with them a wild creature, who was sometimes called the wife, oftentimes called the paramour, of Sir John. Her name was Margaret Cheyne, but in the rough Border speech she was only known as Madge. She talked of herself as Lady Bulmer, and in loose Border fashion she may have gone through some rite which made her believe she was a lawful spouse. But in the legal process taken against her afterwards in London, she was described with the coarse accuracy of an indictment as Margaret Cheyne; all claim to the rank of Lady Bulmer being set aside. Sir John had a second wife, either living or dead, in Ann Bigod of Musgrove, who was the mother of his son Sir Ralph.

In those times, the Border laws as to man and wife were vague and feeble; good enough for trolls and callants; not of much force when applied to women of spirit and men of wit. Madge was a woman of very high spirit; and Sir John, though he could not be called a man of wit, was one who lived by that coarse substitute for wit—his sword. Neither of the twain could boast a very clean record in the past. Mad blood ran through the lady's veins. She was a love-child of that Edward, Duke of Buckingham who had left the Tower as Lord High Constable of England, to come back poor Edward Stafford. Sir John had not only missed his chance of fame, but covered himself with the obloquy which a soldier would rather die than bear. Lord Surrey, the Lord Lieutenant, had broken him and dispersed his troop. The Border knight came back to his eyrie in the Cleveland hills, a place on the slope of Eston Nab, called Wilton Castle, remote from roads and men, and suiting in its savage beauty of marsh and fell, the soreness of his spirit. He was still further tried by the loss of his old and lucrative command on the Tweed.

But the news which year by year came down from London to Sir John and his partner Madge, news brought into the Yorkshire dales by wandering friars, was not of a kind to vex his soul; for they told him of things being wrong at court, of doubt and strife in the council, of messages going and coming between King and Pope, of prophecies uttered by the Maid of Kent; and all these signs of trouble in the south had given promise of fresh employment to the Border-man. William, third Lord Dacre of the North, his cousin, was sore in spirit like himself, owing the court a grudge, not only on religious, but on personal grounds. From Lord Dacre, Sir John took up the tale of sedition, and when the Pilgrimage of Grace began, he was one of the first gentlemen in the dales to march. But hate had more to do with his resolve than love; for the Duke, who was coming up north against the Pilgrims, was the very man who had broken him as a soldier and branded him as a coward. Eager to try a lance with Norfolk, Bulmer rode into camp, attended by his son, his brother, and his faithful Madge.

Now, Madge, who was a devout woman, if not an honest wife, brought with her into the Pilgrim camp, not only her high blood and bickering tongue, but Father Stanhouse, her family priest. Madge, like Sir John, had her grudge against the Duke. Norfolk was her kinsman; she said her brother-in-law, since he was married to her sister, the Lady Elizabeth Stafford; and many others besides Madge Cheyne thought he might have done more to save the Duke, her father, from Wolsey's malice. Madge thought herself equal to her enemy, since her father was a duke, like Norfolk, and her father's daughter was Norfolk's wife. All that lay between them was, in her opinion, a phrase, and a ring. But the day was now come for vengeance. Many other females put on the pilgrim's badge, but no woman in the crowd disputed the foremost place assumed by Madge. The woman was equal to all demands upon her. If any hard thing was to be said, she was prompt with the cruel word. If any bad deed was to be suggested, she was quick with the fatal hint. She roamed through the Pilgrim camp, crying out for blood. She wanted Cromwell's blood. She wanted Norfolk's blood. At first, the death of these two noblemen would have slaked her thirst; but as days went on and difficulties rose in her path, she cried out for other and humbler lives.

When the Pilgrims went home from Doncaster, and the leaders were invited to lay their complaints before the King, Madge spurned the offer, preferring the solitudes of Eston Nab before the gaieties of a faithless court. Aske rode up to London, where he saw the King, and almost fell a victim to his courtly grace. Sir John sent up his son, Sir Ralph, to feel the ground, meaning to join him in London if all seemed well at court. But Madge would neither go nor allow Sir John to go. "Ride to London!" she exclaimed, "she would never ride to London until Cromwell and the Duke were hung." At Wilton Castle she had her confessor, Father Stanhouse, a man of like grit with herself; a wild and passionate fellow, who tramped through the dales and towns, taunting the gentry with the shame of living as pardoned rebels, telling them that Norfolk was now master of every man's land and life, calling upon them to stand by the Spanish princess and by Holy Church.

Father Stanhouse was only one of many priests who raised their parable against what they called the deception of Doncaster. From Fountains, Jervaulx, and Hexham, bands of friars came forth; men who had been turned out of their stalls; and these men spread themselves through the country, preaching against Cromwell and Norfolk; whispering in too willing ears that the pardon was a snare, that the King was forsworn, that no parliament would be held in York, that no petition from the commons would be received, that the whole north would be lost when the King had thrown his garrisons into Newcastle, Scarborough, and Hull, towns on the coast which could be victualled and supported from the sea. Under such preachers of sedition the dalesmen were prepared for some new Pilgrimage of Grace.

The new movement preached by these monks was to differ from the first in this grand point—it was to be a movement of the commons. The knights and squires had played their game; they had been beaten and must stand aside. Some voices called them traitors; others branded them as cowards. What was the upshot of their parley with the Duke? A pardon, which was not a pardon but a sentence. Nothing had been gained. The Pilgrims had been checked at the bridge, only because Darcy was afraid to march, and Aske was ignorant of war. That day was lost; but the north was still strong in numbers and stout in faith. Of the sixty thousand brave lads who had sworn the Pilgrim's oath, not a hundred had gone over to the King. All that was now wanting to success was a movement of the commons.

Adam Sedburgh, Abbot of Jervaulx, and William Thirske, Abbot of Fountains, lent the weight of their names and offices to these appeals.

Hardly less ominous than the tone adopted by the commons and the friars was the attitude taken by the defeated gentry. Knight and squire, after marching proudly to the Don, could not be made to see that the treaty had left them in the position of pardoned rebels; of men who had forfeited their ancient standing and their ancient rights. They found their neighbours in no easy mood; and many a squire who had been hard and high in his former state was taught to feel how weak even rich and big men may become when they cease to have law and power upon their side.

No two gentlemen north of the Trent had more rebuffs to bear than Sir Thomas and Sir Ingram Percy. When they set out on the Pilgrimage of Grace, Earl Henry, their brother, as Warden of the East and Middle Marches, had recalled their commissions of lieutenancy in the Border lands; giving them to Robert Lord Ogle, and Sir Raynold Carnaby, gentlemen of the county who stood well affected to the King. Ogle, a kinsman of the Earl, was made his lieutenant in the Eastern March; Carnaby, a gentleman of his bed-chamber, was made his lieutenant in the Middle March. But this transfer of the Border power was one of those changes which Sir Thomas and Sir Ingram could not accept. When the conference on the bridge broke up, Sir Thomas rode back to his house at Pridhow, and called to his side the men of Hexham and Tynedale; while Sir Ingram rode to Alnwick Castle, whence he summoned the local gentry to meet him at Rothbury. To these acts of the pardoned rebels, Lord Ogle and Sir Raymond Carnaby objected in their capacity of lieutenants to the King's warden, whose commission they held; on which Sir Thomas and Sir Ingram Percy railed in all places against these officers—most of all against Sir Raynold, whom they treated as a mere lacquey in their brother's house. Sir Thomas sent a gang of dalesmen into Sir Raynold's lands—fellows who laid waste his farms, entered his house, and stole his plate. At the same time, in defiance of the Border lieutenants, Sir Ingram Percy began swearing the gentry of Alnwick and Rothbury to stand by each other, shoulder to shoulder, for the honour of God and the good of Holy Church.

Poor folk were at their wits' end. No man could tell on which side lay the law; for, while Carnaby asserted in a meek voice that *he*, lieutenant of the Middle March, was the only man to speak in the King's name, Sir Thomas Percy declared that *he*, and he only, was the warden's true representative in those parts. The loud voice and the haughty bearing won the day. Most men believed Sir Thomas must be right; and Carnaby, who could do nothing save complain to the sick warden, had to hide himself in Chillingham Castle from the attacks of his turbulent foe.

Men were in these cross humours when news came down from Sir Ralph Bulmer, warning his father to look well to himself, as things were going all wrong at Court. Madge leapt to her feet. "If only one man will stir," she screamed, "the whole country will be up." Father Stanhouse supported her. "Now," cried the priest, "is the time to rise—now or never."

Norfolk was on his way to the north; some said with a great army to waste the land; others said with a free pardon in his pocket, and the writs for a new Parliament to be held in York. Which was the true report? Abbot Adam, of Jervaulx, sent his man Simon Jaxon, into Lincolnshire, on pretence of collecting rents from the abbey farms; but with instructions to observe the state of things; to see whether men were standing for King or Pope; to lie about Newark until the Duke should come; and then bring news of the King's army, whether his company was large or small.

Lord Ogle, as lieutenant of the East March, called a court of the Border, by proclamation, at Morpeth; but Ogle proved to be as feeble in presence of these rough Percies as poor Carnaby himself. Sir Thomas sent forth a counter-proclamation, declaring that Lord Ogle had no right to hold a Border court, and calling on his friends and tenants to meet him in Morpeth and resist the attempt by force. Sir Ingram put himself in harness; called on his men, and rode from Alnwick Castle into Morpeth on the appointed day. Ogle now fell back—afraid, as he said, in excuse, of blood being shed, until the King should send him orders what to do. Sir Ingram had some show of law on his side, which his brother Sir Thomas had not; a lucky fact for him when the transactions in which they were now engaged came under the eyes of twelve impartial men. Sir Ingram had persuaded the Abbot of Alnwick, a man devoted to his Church, to ride over to Wressil, in Yorkshire, and get from the sick Earl a commission for Ingram to act as a deputy-warden in the Eastern March. The Abbot rode to Wressil and saw the Earl, to whom he told a lying story of Sir Ingram being now a true liegeman to the King; one who could do his grace high service in the unsettled Borders, if he could only have a writing to that effect under his brother's hand. Henry, who heard this tale with pleasure, gave the Abbot such papers as he desired, naming his brother deputy and sheriff; though he made it a condition that Sir Ingram should serve for that year without pay, since the King had been already put to the full amount of his Border charge.

Sir Ingram sent no answer, as to whether he would act on these terms or not; but he kept the papers, which bore the warden's signature and seal, in order that he might silence any man who should challenge him for preventing Lord Ogle's court.

When news was brought from Newark by Simon Jaxon, that Norfolk was coming with a strong army, the whole Border began to throb with life; church bells were rung, and a fire was lighted on Eston Nab. Some rioters seized on Beverley, a town in which the

Percy tenantry were strong. Sir Francis Bigod raised the banner of Holy Church. "Now is the time," cried Madge to her sluggish lover; "now is the time; Bigod is in the field; up, up and join them." Bigod was the brother of Bulmer's wife. But the country was too much cowed for this revolt to grow, and an attempt which was made on Hull not only failed but compromised Aske. The spirit of the first Pilgrimage could not be revived; for no one could now be deceived by the cry of King and Holy Church; and every man who took up arms was well aware that he was putting a halter round his neck.

Henry the Unthrifty rose from his sick-bed and went to York, hoping to save his brothers and to serve his King. There Sir Ingram joined him, in the mad belief that the dying man could be persuaded to throw in his lot with the commons who were dreaming of a second Pilgrimage of Grace. Henry was sad and stern; Ingram hot and silly. "Cromwell," cried the young knight, "should be hanged as high as men could see;" and when his brother turned on him in pity, the madman added, "Yes; and be I present, as I wish to God I may be, I will thrust my sword into his belly."

The Earl, too weak to arrest his brother on the spot, as he should have done, if only to keep him out of harm, revoked the warrant which he had given him as deputy and sheriff; so that Ingram had no longer a shadow of authority for what he was about to do. But the withdrawal of his warrant was not yet known beyond the gates of York, and he made it his first affair to prevent the news from going north. Of course, his brother would write to Lord Ogle and his other deputies; and he laid a plan for intercepting his brother's letters. Some of his men were planted in the King's highway, along which the messenger would have to ride; and when the carrier came up they seized his bridle, tumbled him from his seat, rifled his sack, and opened the letters which they found. It was a daring crime, for the warden was the King's deputy, and his servant, travelling on public duty, was regarded by the law as the King's own man. To stop him by force, and break open his sealed despatches, was an offence for which the penalty was death. The criminals were baffled. Either the man had no letters for Lord Ogle, or he suspected foul play, and put them out of sight.

Much of the Border was now up; the oath was again put to men at the sword-point; and every one who refused to swear it had to fly into some place of safety until calmer times. Carnaby and his friends shut themselves up in Chillingham Castle; a very strong place on the Till, which Sir Ingram tried to reduce, but with no success for the want of heavy guns. These guns he made an effort to obtain from the King's magazine of arms in Berwick; by representing that he held a legal commission, and needed artillery for the King's service. The falsehood of his assertions was found out in time.

Sir John Bulmer was not the last to declare himself, though his slowness to appear in the field drove Madge to despair. He wished to see the commons in force before he moved. "If the commons will not rise," cried Madge, "let us begone; let us flee away into another land." Sir John took counsel with his priests. The clergy who heard the confessions of their flocks must surely know the state of men's minds; and the cause being that of Holy Church, he had some right to know from those who held all secrets in their keeping, what the churls were about to do. So he sent Stanhouse to Father Frank, a popular priest, and Robert Hugill to the Vicar of Kirkby, to ask, whether the dalesmen would rise against the King or no. "If they will not rise," said Madge, "let us take ship for Scotland."

When Norfolk crossed the Ouse, the commotion began to droop. One day after mass in the chapel of Alnwick Castle, Sir Ingram said to his brother: "I am afraid the King and commons will agree." "Nay," replied Sir Thomas, "that will not be so; for the commons have promised me never to agree without my knowledge." Ingram felt sore. "Tut," cried his elder, "they will never agree, without a pardon for all offences done; therefore let us do what we think, and that whilst we may." But their little hour was gone. While they were talking in the chapel, the officers of justice were on their track; not a pike was lifted by the commons in their defence; and the splendid young knights were soon on their way to the Tower.

One wild scheme came into the crazy pates on Eston Nab. Sir John and Madge proposed to descend from their hold into the towns; to raise the men of Guisborough, among whom the monks had much sway; and try a dashing blow at the ducal camp. If they could seize the Duke, and carry him by force to Wilton Castle, they fancied that something good might come of such a deed. They could either sell him to the King, or send him to the devil. But while they were dreaming of this bold attempt, the officers were at hand, and in a few hours Sir John and Madge were also marching south.

William Thirske and Adam Sedburgh, abbots of Fountains and Jervaulx, were also on the road.

The procession of Pilgrims was long and doleful; but the foremost offenders were only too soon at Tyburn tree.

Darcy, Aske, Bigod, Constable, were quickly put away. Sir Thomas Percy and Sir John Bulmer pleaded guilty. Madge did the same. They were all condemned to die. The bill against Sir Ralph was dropped.

Adam, abbot of Jervaulx, pleaded not guilty. He had not willingly joined the rebels. He could not deny that he had fed them from the abbey larder, and that he had given them money; but the meat was given in charity, and the money for services in tending the abbey sheep. Neither could he deny being out with the Pilgrims; but he explained to his judges, that when the rebels knocked at the abbey gate and called upon him to come forth, he slipped away by a back door and hid himself for three days and nights in Witton Fell; but being tracked by scouts, he was brought into the camp by force.

A jury brought him in guilty, and he was hung at Tyburn, in company with Sir Thomas Percy, Sir John Bulmer, and William Thirske.

Sir Ralph Bulmer was pardoned in the following year, and restored in blood by Edward the Sixth, when he went back to Eston Nab, a wiser and a poorer man.

Sir Ingram Percy, like Sir John Bulmer, had lived with a woman in the lawless Border way. When he died, in the year of his pardon, he left a daughter by this paramour, for whom he made special provision in his will. Two centuries after they were dead and gone, the story of this lawless love, and this illegitimate child, came to occupy public attention for many years. Sir Ingram was the ancestor from whom Percy the Trunkmaker derived his claims.

Madge Cheyne met the most terrible fate of all. The wild daughter of Buckingham was sentenced to die by fire; and being carried in a cart to Smithfield, she was placed in the centre of a pile of faggots, and on the very spot where so many poor Lollards had been burnt, her passionate life was licked up by the flames.

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CHAPTER XIV.

HEIRS TO THE CROWN.

SIXTEEN years after the Pilgrims of Grace had been hung and burnt alive for standing by the old faith, men and women were being hung at Tyburn and burnt at Smithfield for standing by the new. A queen had risen who could not walk in her father's way; she was a Spanish, not an English, queen; and the men who had done her father's will were now being paid for that service to her house with a pile of faggots and a length of rope.

A roll of drama now unfolds itself in the Good Lord Cobham's chamber; the romance of three Queens, the epoch of English thought; the opening scene of which drama was a contest for the crown.

On what may be called the opening day of this new reign, the Beauchamp tower and some adjoining rooms and vaults, never until that day used as prisons, received into their embrace a family group; for one of whom, a fair and innocent girl, the world has never ceased to feel that sad and tender passion which a father nurses for the child whom he has loved and lost.

That family group consisted of John Dudley, the proud Duke of Northumberland, Lord President of the Council; John, Earl of Warwick, a youth of twenty-three; Lord Ambrose Dudley, a younger son; Lord Robert, a boy of twenty, but already the husband of Amy Robsart; Lord Guilford, and Lord Henry, still in their teens; and that young wife of Guilford Dudley, who is known as the Nine Days' Queen. These noble folk were scattered through the Tower; Duke John in the Gate house, then called the Garden tower; Lord Ambrose and his youngest brother, Lord Henry, in the Nun's bower; Queen Jane in the deputy-lieutenant's house; Lord Robert in the lower tier, Lord Guilford in the middle tier of Beauchamp tower.

John, Earl of Warwick, a laborious carver, left the work of his knife in many places on these walls. Some of his pieces are light and jesting; all

> "The sadder that they make us smile."

On the north side of the chamber, just above the name of Adam Sedbar, abbot of Jervaulx, stand these four letters:

JANE

On the same side of this room, but on the inner jamb of the recess, this name occurs a second time.

These things are not her doing. Lady Jane never lodged in this chamber; and after her nine days' reign was over, she never assumed the style of queen. They are the work of her partner in greatness—Lord Guilford; a youth who was always whining to be king.

From this family group of prisoners, two men and one woman were taken to the block; an old warrior, a young bridegroom, and a lovely bride. All three made a good end of life; though neither the stout soldier, nor the gallant youth, adorned the stake with so much patient beauty as that girl of seventeen summers, who had come to the end of her nine days' reign.

The crime which sent her to the block was her royal blood; and her story is a part of that great contention for the crown which brought so many princes of her family to the Tower.

When Edward the Sixth died, the keenest wit in England could not tell in whom the right to succeed him lay. Law was thought to be on one side, right on the other side. Parliament had been asked to settle, unsettle, and resettle the order in which the throne should go, so often, that every point of law and of fact had become confused, except that which seemed to lie in the power of nature and of habit. Every man said the sceptre *ought* to descend upon the true heir. But who was that true heir? Those who had the best claims by blood appeared to have very poor claims by law.

As King Edward left no issue, his crown fell back; first, upon his father's heirs; next, upon his grandfather's heirs; then upon the heirs of Edward the Fourth; afterwards, upon the heirs of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence; finally, upon the heirs general of Edward the Third. These lines were represented by claimants more or less able to make good their right.

The front rank consisted of not less than eight pretenders; all of whom were women! Of these eight women, not one had a clear title; two of them being aliens, while six were blemished in their birth. Here, then, was a situation for the opening drama:—eight females fighting for a crown which had never yet been worn on a female brow!

I. PRINCESS MARY.

II. PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

The two sisters of Edward the Sixth had been set aside by Acts of Council, Acts of Parliament, Acts of the Church, and so far as state decrees could put the King's sisters out of court, they were out of court. Their mothers had been cast away on the ground that they had never been lawful wives; their birth had been assailed; their titles had been quashed; their rank had been reduced; their rights, as king's children, had been extinguished. These public acts had never been repealed. In his old age, their father had in some sort owned his daughters; but the act in which this show of justice had been done was of doubtful force, since the previous statutes which defined their bastardy were left untouched. Indeed, his act for regulating the succession had only named them, in so far as they *were* his children. They were not restored in blood; they were not declared to have been lawfully born; they were not adopted into the regal line, except as additional heirs, and with the risk of being excluded by a final will. Whether they had been excluded, or not, could only be known to the King's executors, who were supposed to have been sworn to secrecy during King Edward's life.

III. MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

IV. PRINCESS MARGARET.

After the luckless sisters of King Edward, the crown would pass to the heirs of Henry the Seventh. Now, Henry the Seventh had left behind him two daughters—the Princess Margaret and the Princess Mary, both of whom had issue living when he died.

Margaret, the elder sister, had been married to James the Fourth, King of Scots, to whom she had borne a son, afterwards James the Fifth, father of Mary, the Queen of Scots. This Queen Mary, born on a foreign soil, was excluded from her natural place in the order of succession by the Alien Act. But her mother, Queen Margaret, had left a second child.

That field of Flodden, which put James the Fifth on his father's throne, made his mother, Queen Margaret, a widow—young enough for love, and ready enough to fall into dangerous ways. A very handsome fellow, Archibald Douglas, sixth Earl of Angus, caught her eye. He had a wife and daughter living; but the Scottish queen (true sister of Bluff Harry) cared little for law when her passions were on fire; and in less than twelve months after the great disaster of Flodden Field, she took to herself the handsome and wedded thane.

They used each other ill. Margaret was shrewd of tongue; Angus fickle in the point of love. One child was born of this godless union; little Princess

Margaret, born within the Border, to save her English rights. For a dozen years, Queen Margaret led a wretched life; she quarrelled with her husband; she left his house; she went back to live with him; she found him faithless to her; she left him once again. The court was vexed with her troubles; scandalised by his amours. At length the Queen procured a divorce from Rome, by which her marriage was declared null and void, on the ground that Angus had a wife alive when he took the Queen.

This decree would have made poor little Margaret illegitimate; but a brief was brought from Rome to the effect that, since the mother had gone through the form of marriage in good faith, the child, though born in adultery, should be considered as lawful heiress of Archibald and Queen Margaret, just as though they had been actually man and wife! Rome could do much in those days; but Rome herself could not prevent rivals from laughing at a declaration which made a tavern jest of both law and fact.

V. PRINCESS FRANCES.

VI. LADY JANE.

Mary, the younger child of Henry the Seventh, had been married to Louis the Twelfth, King of France (son of Duke Charles the Poet), who died, as it were, in his honeymoon. Within a few months of the King's demise, Queen Mary had been secretly united to her first lover, Charles Brandon, afterwards created Duke of Suffolk. By this second husband the Queen had issue two princesses—Frances and Elinor—to the first of whom her eventual rights descended, though not without legal flaw; since, at the time of the Queen's marriage with Brandon, that nobleman had a wife alive. Frances, elder daughter of Brandon and the Queen, had in turn been given to Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, a man of high birth, and of austere life; but weak in character, short in vision, apt to go wrong when the reason for his going wrong seemed good;

a man of order and ideas, without will of his own, and with very little sense; a man not born to mate with princes and fight for crowns. Here, again, that demon doubt was in the royal house; for Grey had a wife alive when he wedded Frances, in Lady Catharine Fitz-Alan, sister of Henry, seventeenth Earl of Arundel; a woman whom he had wedded in his early youth, and from whom he parted in view of the more brilliant bride. By his separation from Lady Catharine, Grey provoked the undying enmity of Lord Arundel, once his brother-in-law and dearest friend; an enmity which lived through a score of years, which fed itself in secret, never dying out, until the hour in which Arundel stood on Tower Hill gloating over his old friend's headless trunk.

Created Duke of Suffolk on account of his royal spouse, Grey imagined he could forget the wrongs which he had done to Lady Catharine—the insult he had cast upon her house. Three daughters blessed his union; Lady Jane, Lady Catharine, and Lady Mary; all of whom, as well as their mother Frances, were alive when King Edward died. The princess was a lady of meek temper and austere life; humble, affectionate; with little desire to shine in courts. Such pretensions as belonged to her blood she passed on to her children: first of all, to Lady Jane.

VII. CATHARINE POLE.

The Poles, or De la Poles, went back to Princess Margaret, daughter of George, Duke of Clarence. This lady, who had been married to Sir Richard Pole, left four sons—Henry Lord Montagu, Sir Geoffrey Pole, Arthur Pole, and Reginald Pole. Reginald was the able and restless intriguer known as Cardinal Pole. Lord Montagu had been caught in some plot, of which his brother, the cardinal, was the secret mover, and sent to the block, leaving an only child, Catharine, who had now become the wife of Francis Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon, to represent his mother's line.

VIII. THE INFANTA ISABEL.

A more remote, and perhaps a more menacing claim was that of the Infanta Doña Isabel Clara of Spain—a lady who traced her line through the kings of Portugal to Princess Philippa and John of Gaunt.

Besides these ladies, there lay in the Tower, in some forgotten cell, a male pretender in Edward Courtney, a youth whom nobody had seen since he was a child of twelve. He had no friends in power, and nobody fretted about his right; yet he was a grandson of Princess Catharine, youngest daughter of Edward the Fourth, and thus he represented the cause of York.

All these claimants had their partisans; though the main interest gathered around the Princess Mary and the Lady Jane. Duke John, President of King Edward's Council, thought the legal right either lay with Lady Jane, or could be given to her by force. Jane was young, beautiful, accomplished, popular; and if she came to her own, he, John Dudley, who had heard his father hooted through the streets, and seen him butchered like a dog, might live to hail a grandson on the throne. This bold, bad man had four sons living; all young and of handsome presence; fellows who could draw, and dance, and play the lute, as well as they could ride, and joust, and run the ring. Three of these youths were already sealed away; but Guilford, a boy of seventeen, was free; and when the Duke perceived that the King would die, and leave no heirs, he began to scheme for marrying Lord Guilford to Lady Jane. Mary was unpopular in London. Let Edward now die, while every rein of the government lay in Dudley's grasp, Jane might become queen in her mother's right, without much cavil from Mary's friends. Such an event would be hailed as a triumph of England over Spain.

The old schemer had not much trouble with Grey and his wife. These feeble folk were only too glad to put themselves and their child into the Duke's strong hands. To them, the Duke was not only the greatest man in England, but one of the greatest men in Europe. As a soldier he had no equal; as a statesman he was thought far-seeing and safe; as a patriot he was held in high esteem. Most men believed him honest in his faith; some went so far as to call him saint. Ridley, Rogers, Knox, and all their followers prayed for him as the soundest pillar of the reforming Church.

Much of this high character had once belonged to the Duke of right, but the lust of power had crept into his blood and poisoned the springs of his religious life.

Lady Jane, a soft and grave, though very lovely girl, who had been pinched and bobbed into learning by her parents, raised few obstacles to their scheme for her union. She had no liking for the Dudleys; she had a little secret of her own; but on hearing that the King, as well as both her parents, wished her to marry Guilford, she took her wedding with this youth like a lesson in Greek, or any other trial; bowed her sweet head, and went with him, a child like herself, to church. On Whit-Sunday the youth and maiden were united in holy wedlock at Durham House in the Strand, in the presence of many people; the bride being dowered with Stanfield Hall in Norfolk; a house which even then had an ominous fame; but the bride and groom were both so young, that when the rite was over, Lady Jane begged as an act of grace, that she might go home with her mother to Suffolk House, in Southwark, until she and her husband were of riper age.

Her wish was law; but that riper age was not to come for either Guilford or Lady Jane. Six weeks after this parting of youth and maiden at the altar in Durham House, the King was dead, the throne was empty, and the hour for which Duke John had schemed was come. Now was to be found, through rough and ready tests, that "true heir to the crown" which Acts of Parliament were powerless to unmake.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NINE DAYS' QUEEN.

KING EDWARD died on the summer night of Thursday, July 6, at Greenwich Palace, so calmly, that the fact could be kept a secret all that night and all next day, while Dudley matured his plans. The council were of his advice, the fleet and army at his back. On the City he could count for passive assent; but passive assent was not enough. On Saturday morning he sent for Sir Thomas White, Lord Mayor, six aldermen, and a score of the richest merchants from Lombard Street, to whom he showed the King's body, and papers which he called the King's letters-patent, fixing the order of succession to the crown. These papers, which gave the sceptre to Lady Jane, Dudley got the Lord Mayor and citizens to sign. The Londoners were told to keep the King's death and the contents of these letters-patent secret, until the lords should make them known. Dudley's plan was, that Edward's death should not be noised abroad until Mary had been lodged in the Tower, and Jane was ready to announce herself as Queen.

When Edward was dying, Mary had been called to his bedside by the council, and she had come so near to Greenwich as the royal lodge of Hunsdon, twenty-five miles distant. So soon as the King was dead, Lord Robert was sent off by Dudley with a party of mounted guards to bring her in. Once in the Tower, the unpopular princess would have found few knights to strike in her behalf.

Dudley himself rode down to Sion, near Isleworth, his house on the Thames, to which Lady Jane had repaired. When Dudley summoned the Princess Mary to Greenwich he sent his wife to Suffolk House for Lady Jane. Frances, her mother, refused to give her up; Jane herself preferred to stay in Southwark; on which the Duchess of Northumberland fetched her son, who begged Lady Jane, on her duty as a wife, to depart with him. Not liking to begin her married life by an act of disobedience, Lady Jane went with the Duchess and her son to Chelsea. There they locked her up till Sunday, on which day Lady Sydney, her husband's sister, brought her a request from Dudley to repair at once to Sion, and await his coming, with a message of highest moment from the King. She was not aware that Edward had been dead three days!

The two ladies took boat at Chelsea. When Lady Jane arrived at Sion, the house was empty, but the great lords soon came dashing in; the Duke himself, President of the Council; William Parr, Marquis of Northampton, Grand Chamberlain, and brother of Queen Catharine Parr; Francis Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon, husband of Catharine Pole; William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, husband of Anne Parr, the Queen's sister; Henry Fitz-Alan, the smiling and deadly Earl of Arundel; accompanied by the Duchess of Northumberland and the Marchioness of Northampton. Arundel and Pembroke fell on their knees, and were the first to kiss Lady Jane's hand as queen.

By help of these men and women the first and fatal part of Dudley's work was done. Jane fainted when they told her she was queen. She had loved King Edward with a sister's love; read with him, played with him, shared his secrets and his hopes; and when she heard that he was dead she swooned and sank upon her face. They told her she was queen by

Edward's will, according to the Acts which vested the succession in the King. Pembroke and Arundel, who were famous soldiers, swore by their souls they would shed their blood and give their lives to maintain her rights. Then Lady Jane stood up before the lords, saying she had never dreamt of such greatness being thrust upon her, but that if she was called to reign, she prayed for grace to act as might be best for God's glory and His people's good.

The next day, being Sunday, she remained at Sion, surrounded by her husband's family; the Duke giving orders of many kinds, instructing heralds, sending out proclamations, writing to the lords and sheriffs, and acting generally as protector. That night, the interregnum was to end, the new reign to begin.

First Day.—On a bright July morning, Queen Jane embarked in the royal barge at Sion, and followed by a cloud of galleys, bright with bunting, gay with music, riotous with cannon, dropped down the river, making holiday along the banks, passing the great Abbey, calling for an hour at Whitehall Palace, and for another hour at Durham House, and shooting through the arches of London Bridge. She landed at the Queen's stair about three o'clock, under the roar of saluting guns, and was conducted, through crowds of kneeling citizens, to her regal lodgings by the two Dukes, the Marquises of Winchester and Northampton, Arundel, Pembroke, Paget, Westmoreland, Warwick; all the great noblemen who had made her Queen. Her mother, Frances, bore her train; and her husband, Guilford, walked by her side, cap in hand, and bowing when she deigned to speak. The Lieutenant, Sir John Brydges, and his deputy, Thomas Brydges, received her majesty on their knees. At five o'clock she was proclaimed in the City, when the King's death was announced and his final testament made known.

But the day was not to end in peace; for after supper was over, and the Queen had gone to her rooms, the Marquis of Winchester, lord treasurer, brought up the private jewels, which he desired her to wear, and the royal crown, which he wished her to try on. Jane looked at the shining toy, and put it from her, saying, "It will do." Winchester told her another crown would have to be made. Another crown! For whom must another crown be made? For the Lord Guilford, said the Marquis, since he was to be crowned with her as king. Crowned as king! Surprised and hurt by what the treasurer had let fall, she sat in silent pain, until Guilford came into her room, when she broke into a fit of honest wrath. The crown, she said, was not a plaything for boys and girls. She could not make him king. A duke she had power to make, but only Parliament could make a man king. Guilford began to cry, and left the room. In a few minutes he came back with his mother, still whimpering that he wanted to be king, and would not be a duke. The Queen was firm; and after hot speech between the old lady and the young girl, the Duchess took her boy away, declaring that she would not leave him with an ungrateful wife.

Second Day.—Bad news came in from the eastern shires. When Lord Robert had got to Hunsdon his prize was lost; no man could tell him how or why; but the lodge was empty, and the Princess gone. Mary had been well served; for while Dudley was drawing a curtain round the bed, the false Arundel and the honest Throckmorton were both intent on letting her know that King Edward was no more. Sir Nicholas rode to London, told his three brothers the dread news, and took counsel with them as to what should be done. The four men, sitting in a dark room, whispering in hot words that summer night, were but the types of four millions of English subjects. They were loyal men, stout of heart, and true in faith; men who feared that Mary might be led astray through her confessors and her Spanish friends; but who chose to risk that evil rather than confront the perils of a civil war; a war which seemed likely, if once begun, to prove longer and fiercer than the strife of the Red against the White Rose; seeing that the weaker party could always count on the support of Spain and Rome. Their first thought was to do right. Mary was the true heir to her brother's crown, and they could not stand aloof when powerful and unscrupulous men seemed bent on driving her from her father's realm. As Sir Nicholas put the case in his doggrel rhyme:—

> "And though I liked not the religion,
> Which all her life Queen Mary had profest,
> Yet in my mind that wicked motion,
> Right heir for to displace I did detest."

After long debate the four brothers agreed to mount their horses, to leave London by different roads, to spur with all speed for the royal lodge, to inform the Princess of her brother's death, and warn her to fly from Hunsdon before the arrival of Lord Robert's company of horse. Arundel's man confirmed the news. A night ride saved the Princess, who sent out letters to the shires and cities, calling out her people, and then rode swiftly through the Suffolk flats towards Kenning Hall, a strong castle on the river Waveney, where she proclaimed herself Queen.

Missing his prize at Hunsdon, Lord Robert was ordered to gallop hard upon such track as he might find; and, to aid his search, Lord Warwick was sent out with a second company of horse. These young men had their father's orders how to act, and there is reason to suspect his orders would have justified them in putting Mary to death. Of course, she could be called a suicide, and three or four frightened servants might have been got to swear they had seen her either mix the drug or plunge the knife into her heart. Dudley, who already contemplated sending Bishop

Gardiner, Edward Courtney, and the Duke of Norfolk, to the block, was of opinion that the throne would be all the more stable if it were red with blood.

Third Day.—On Wednesday morning, while the lords were sitting with Queen Jane in council, news came to the Tower that Mary was at Kenning Hall; that John Bouchier, Earl of Bath, was with her; that Henry Ratcliffe, Earl of Sussex, was on his way to join her; and that sons of Lord Wharton, and Lord Mordaunt, with many gentlemen of note, were up in arms.

Kenning Hall belonged to the Howards, whose tenants and followers hated Dudley and all his tribe; partly for the wrongs which his party had done the Duke; still more for the ruthless manner in which he had scourged their country in pursuit of Kett. The Queen was safer than she knew among these Norfolk men, who not only flocked to her banners the moment they were raised, but threatened to put every man's land under fire who should dispute her claim. Knights and squires kept pouring in, hot with the summer sun, and grey with the summer dust; and the curfew rang that Wednesday night on what promised to be strife between the English commons and the English nobles; squire and yeoman striking for Queen Mary, while duke and earl were striking for Queen Jane.

The council sitting in the White tower now felt that the time had gone by for such feeble warriors as Lord Warwick and Lord Robert to do their work; and the question rose, as to which of the great lords would go forth in arms against the rival queen? If Norfolk had been free, and of the council, he would have been the man to send. Not a pike in East Anglia would have been raised against the Lord of Framlingham and Norwich, the hero of Flodden, the suppressor of the Pilgrimage of Grace. But Dudley had kept the Duke a prisoner, and the Duke's tenantry were now arming in Mary's name. Some one else must go. The council fixed on Grey; an unwise choice, if fighting was to come, since Grey had never yet led an army in the field. Jane would not consent. She begged the lords to make a second choice. She needed her father's counsels; she prayed them, tears in her eyes, not to send him from her side. Arundel turned his serpentine eyes on Dudley. He was the soldier of their party; he had led an army into Norfolk; he had quickened men's minds with a lively terror; and he knew the county as a general ought to know his ground. These facts were urged upon him by the lords, who seemed to think his presence in the shire would be enough to drive the Princess Mary into France.

"Well," said the Duke, "since you think it good, I and mine will go, not doubting of your fidelity to the Queen's majesty, whom I leave in your hands."

From the Council chamber in the White tower they passed through the chapel into the Queen's apartments, where Jane thanked the Duke for leaving her father by her side, and, wishing him a speedy return, bade him good-night.

Fourth Day.—Early on Thursday morning, men, horses, guns, and carts began to block up the Strand in front of Durham House, the Duke's residence near Charing Cross. Dudley called for his suit of steel, and tried it on. He sent for cannon from the Tower, with waggons of powder and shot and many field-pieces. After breakfast, he begged the council to prepare his commission, as the Queen's Lieutenant, forthwith, and to send on his instructions by mounted messenger to Newmarket, as soon as they could be drawn up. To the peers who came to Durham House to dine with him and see him off, he made a speech; in which he told them, that he was going forth in the common cause; that he left the Queen in their hands; that he felt no doubt of their faithfulness; that they were all engaged in God's work; that any man who faltered in the cause would come to grief. At this moment dinner was brought in, on which Dudley concluded in a few words, "I have not spoken to you," he said, "in this sort upon any distrust of your truth, but have put you in remembrance . . . and this I pray you, wish me no worse God-speed than ye would have yourselves." To which one of the lords replied, "If you mistrust any of us in this matter, your grace is much deceived." The Duke made answer, "I pray God it be so; let us go to dinner." Then they sat down.

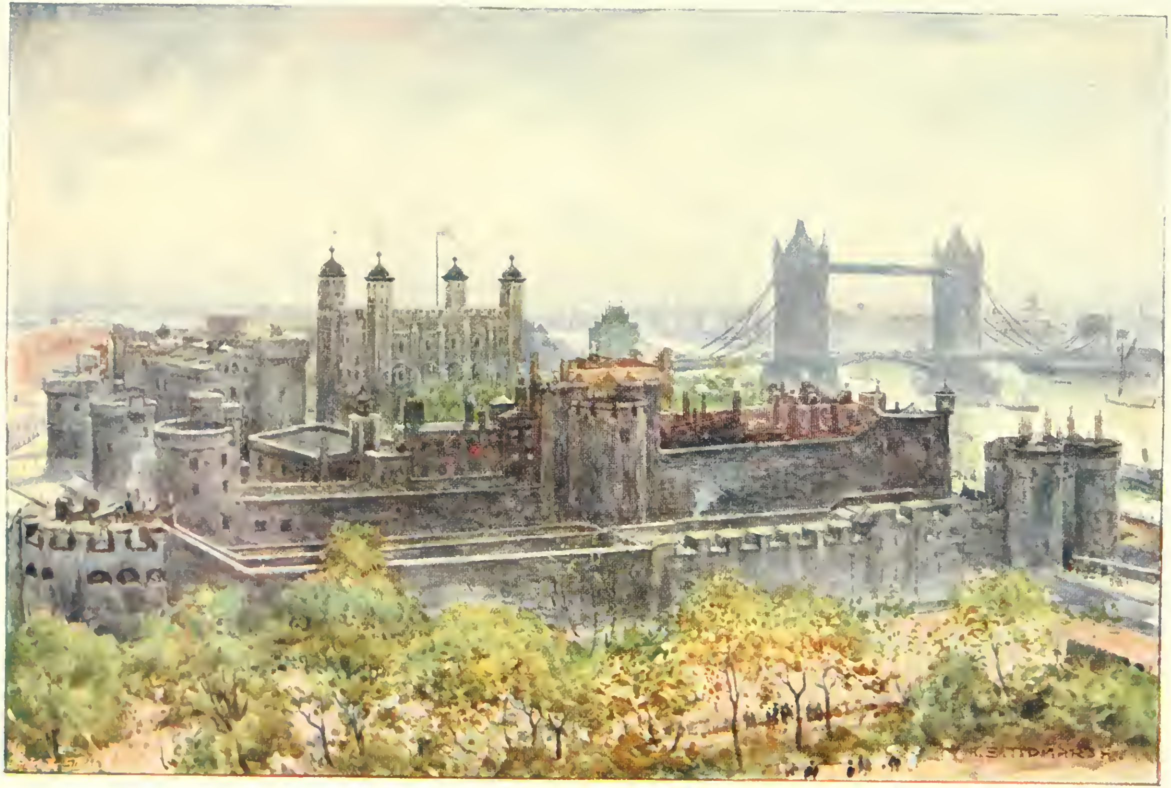
After dinner, Dudley rode down to the Tower and took his leave of the Queen. As he came back from his audience into the Council chamber, he met Lord Arundel, who prayed that God would be with his grace, saying he was sorry it was not his luck to be going into the field with him, as he wished no better end than to fight in his cause and die at his feet. A page, named Thomas Lovel was with the Duke. "Farewell, gentle Thomas," said Arundel to the boy, "farewell, with all my heart." The lords came down the spiral stairs, and stood upon the green for a last greeting of their fellows; the Duke of Northumberland first, then the Marquis of Northampton, Lord Grey of Wilton and many more; after which final greeting they took boat on the wharf, and went back to their houses in the Strand.

Fifth Day.—On Friday morning the Duke rode proudly forth, with his first train of guns, a body of six hundred men, and a magnificent staff. If great names and offices could have given the victory to Queen Jane, she might have slept in peace. Besides the Lord General, Dudley himself, went the Lord Admiral, Edward Lord Clinton; the Marquis of Northampton; the Earls of Warwick, Huntingdon, and Westmoreland; Lord Grey of Wilton, Lord Ambrose Dudley, Lord Robert Dudley, with most of the men whose steel had been tried in actual war. But they were Generals without troops; Admirals without ships; Lords without following. Clinton and Huntingdon were enemies in disguise. As they pranced along Shoreditch, the Duke observed with a soldier's eye that the crowd which flocked to see the martial array go past, in all its bravery of steel and plume, looked sad and curious, and turning to Lord Grey, who was riding at his side, remarked, "The people press to see us, but no man cries, 'God speed you!'"

Yet Mary feared to wait their coming at Kenning Hall; a place too near the capital, too far from any port; so she leapt to horse, and, with a long train of riders, dashed across country towards Framlingham Castle, the Duke of Norfolk's stronghold on the Ore; riding so hard that she made no less than forty miles in a single day. Once that day she was in peril, for in part of her road she fell foul of the companies led by Warwick and Lord Robert. But on the first shout of the onset, Jane's troops went over to her side, and Dudley's sons escaped becoming Mary's prisoners only by the fleetness of their steeds.

Later in the day, a messenger from Bucks brought word to the Council in the Tower that Lord Windsor, Sir Edward Hastings, and other gentlemen, were raising men in that county in Queen Mary's name.

Sixth Day.—On Saturday a train of waggons left the Tower, with arms, supplies, and cannon for the Duke, who found himself in presence of a thousand troubles on which he had never counted. The commons gave him no help; for no one liked him; and as he advanced into East Anglia he found himself in the midst of active foes. When he heard bad news from the front, he halted. Mary was now at Framlingham Castle, surrounded by a guard, which was strong in number, if not in discipline and arms. She had been proclaimed in the market-place of Norwich,


H. E. TIDMARSH

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VIEW OF THE TOWER (WITH THE TOWER BRIDGE) FROM TOWER HILL.

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from which city a band of gentlemen had ridden to her court. Worst of all, some ships which Clinton had sent from London to the Norfolk coast, on the pretence of arresting Mary's flight, should she try to leave the country, had gone over to the Queen, and supplied her with guns and stores. From other shires, the news was equally dark and fitful. Bucks and Beds were stirring; Lord Derby was up in Cheshire; and the midland counties were about to march. Dudley, who knew his business as a soldier, saw that these changes must be met; and sending in hot haste to London for fresh troops, he pushed on for Cambridge, which he reached that night.

Seventh Day.—The summer Sunday dawned on a country wasting with a passionate pain. In every city, the crowd was for Mary, while the higher class of thinkers and reformers was for Jane. Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, walked down to Paul's Cross, and preached an eloquent sermon against the Scarlet Woman; while John Knox was thundering forth his prophetic warnings at Amersham in Bucks. From a thousand pulpits England was that day warned that a house divided against itself must fall.

In the palace of the Tower, a cry of defection rose, but the garrison was too prompt in action for the evil spirit to get abroad. About seven o'clock, the gates were suddenly locked, and the keys carried up to the Queen's room. The guards were told that a seal was missing; but in fact, the missing seal was the Lord High Treasurer. Pembroke and Winchester had tried to leave the Tower privately; Pembroke had been watched and taken; but Winchester had got away. The first thought of every man was that he had carried off his money; and some archers of the guard were sent after him to his house, with orders to arrest and bring him back. They seized him in his bed, and delivered him at the Tower wicket to Sir John Brydges, the Lieutenant, as the clocks were chiming twelve.

Eighth Day.—Monday brought fresh sorrow to Queen Jane. Her house was divided against itself: the Duke, her father, had no confidence in the Duke, her father-in-law; the Duchess of Northumberland was quarrelling with the Duchess of Suffolk; and the foolish Guilford was going about whimpering that he wanted to be king. Her council was also divided against itself. Dudley was absent; Pembroke and Winchester were little more than prisoners; Paget and Arundel were false; Bedford was suspected; and Cranmer, if true to Jane, was acting as a councillor with the faint heart of a man who feared that he was doing wrong. Her country was divided, too, but in no equal parts. Jane was popular, yet the people were mainly on Mary's side; and no thunders of Ridley and Knox could make common folk understand that a woman ought to lose her civil rights because she held certain opinions about the Keys and the Bread and Wine. As yet there had never been a prince on the throne of hostile creed; and the people had yet to read in the light of Smithfield fires the sad lesson of a country divided in its body and its head. The commons felt for Mary, and they fancied she could do no harm. Single and sickly, she was not likely either to leave a son or even to live long. Her sister,—strong and beautiful as a pard, was English in blood, and English in thought. What the Spanish weakness of Mary might put crooked, the English strength of her sister could set straight. They would rather bear with Mary's monks for a time—a very short time—than start on a new contention of Lancaster and York. Wise men might forecast the future in another way; but in days of turmoil, wise men do not shoulder pikes and brandish broadswords; and while the thinkers were weighing arguments for and against the two queens, a hundred thousand men, moved by their hot blood only, were bearing Queen Mary to her father's throne.

Ninth Day.—On Tuesday morning the game was seen to be up. The Queen's Council were nearly of one mind. Cranmer and Grey were true; but of the noble crowd who elbowed them at the table, every other man was false. Most of them, Winchester, Arundel, Pembroke, Paget, Shrewsbury, had made their peace, and kept their places in the Council only to betray the girl whom they had forced to ascend the throne. The army was as rotten as the Council. When Dudley marched on Bury, his soldiers mutinied on the road, and forced him to fall back on Cambridge, which was already filling with Queen Mary's friends. In fact, when he took up his quarters in King's College, he was a prisoner, though suffered to sleep without the appearance of a guard.

Next day, the Council left Queen Jane in the Tower alone; Queen Mary was proclaimed in Cheap and in St. Paul's Churchyard. The nine days' reign was over.

When the archers came to the Tower gates, demanding admission in Queen Mary's name, Grey gave up the keys, and rushed into his daughter's room. The Summer Queen was sitting in a chair of state, beneath a royal canopy. "Come down, my child," said the miserable Duke; "this is no place for you." Jane thought so too; and quitted her throne without a sigh.

CHAPTER XVI.

DETHRONED.

PEMBROKE had been the first to salute Queen Jane: he was now the first to proclaim Queen Mary. Pembroke was a bold man, a good soldier, a rich baron, able to put twenty thousand pikes in the field. Dudley excepted, no one had higher motives for supporting Jane than Pembroke; since his eldest son, William Lord Herbert, had been united to Lady Catharine Grey, Jane's sister and heiress. But he saw how the tide was flowing; and he was more concerned to save his head from the axe, than to enjoy the prospect of a matrimonial crown for his son.

The Council left the Tower, the gates of which were now open to them, for Baynard's Castle—not the great hold which John had ravaged, but a palace built on the site by Henry the Eighth—to which they called Sir Thomas White, Lord Mayor, with some of the City merchants, in whose presence Arundel announced that Mary was the true queen and Jane a mere usurper of the crown; on which Pembroke drew his sword, and flashing the steel in their faces cried—"This weapon shall make Mary Queen." Sir Thomas and the citizens were hurried off from Baynard's Castle to Cheapside, where Pembroke read the proclamation of Queen Mary, threw his cap into the air, and flung a handful of coins among the crowd. Paget and Arundel leapt to horse, and rode at night towards Framlingham

Castle, where they were joyfully received by the Queen, who heard from them the minutest details of the work which they had done for her in London. Paget was detained by the Queen as her adviser, while Arundel set out for Cambridge to arrest the Duke.

Dudley was sore in mind. He saw that his scheme had failed, and knew that his blood was forfeit to the law. When news came to him by a private hand, that Jane had been abandoned in the Tower, and Mary proclaimed Queen in Cheapside, he called for a herald, and going into the market-place with Northampton and Warwick, he read the proclamation and threw up his cap. But his loyalty was too late. Roger Slegge, the Mayor of Cambridge, followed him to King's College, and took him prisoner in Queen Mary's name.

One chance of escape was thrown into his way. Late in the evening letters arrived in Cambridge from the Council that every man should go to his own place. The object was to get the Duke's force disbanded and dispersed. Dudley drew Slegge's attention to these orders. "You do me wrong," he said, "to withdraw my liberty. See you not the Council's letters, that all men should go away as they list?" Slegge was puzzled, and withdrew his men. If Dudley had sprung to horse, and ridden off that moment, he might have found a boat, and escaped beyond sea. He let the moment slip. Warwick drew on his boots, called for his horse, and got himself ready to ride away; but the Duke hung on, as though he were hoping, like a desperate gambler, for some sudden change in the game. Late in the night, he heard that Arundel was coming to his rooms; then his heart sank within him; and going forth to meet him in the outer chamber, he knelt at the Earl's feet, and prayed him to be good to him for the love of God. Arundel was cold. "Consider," said the Duke, "I have done nothing but by consent of you and the whole Council."

"My lord," said Arundel, "I am sent hither by the Queen, and in her name I arrest you."

"And I obey," replied the broken Dudley; "and I beseech you, my lord of Arundel, use mercy towards me, knowing the case as it is."

"My lord," quoth the Earl, "you should have sought for mercy sooner; I must do according to my commandment."

They were still in the outer room of his lodging in King's College, now filled with knights and gentlemen, to whom Arundel gave the Duke in charge, and then withdrew. For two hours, Dudley chafed and stamped about that room, in the midst of strange and angry men, without the comfort of his page and servant to attend him. When he wished to go into his bedroom, the guards prevented him. Then he looked out of his window, and, seeing Arundel go by, he called—

"My lord, my lord of Arundel, a word with you."

"What would you have, my lord?"

"I beseech your lordship," cried the Duke, "for the love of God, let me have Coxe, one of my chamber, to wait upon me."

"You shall have Tom, your boy," said the bitter Earl.

"Alas, my lord," whined the Duke, "what stead can a boy do me? I pray you, let me have Coxe."

Arundel turned away; but in going, he sent orders for Tom and Coxe to have access to their master.

Warwick was taken in his boots, and along with Lord Robert Dudley, the Marquis of Northampton, Sir Thomas Palmer, and Sir Henry Gates, was brought to the Tower, of which Arundel was now made Constable. All the prison rooms being full, they had to be crowded by Sir John Brydges into chambers never up to that day used as prisons—such as the Garden tower, the Garden house, the deputy's house, and the Develin tower. The Duke was lodged in the Garden tower; Sir Thomas Palmer in the Garden house; the Marquis of Northampton in the Develin tower, behind St. Peter's church. Jane was in the house of Thomas Brydges, brother and deputy of Sir John.

Warwick and his brother Guilford were lodged in the middle room of Beauchamp tower; where they began to carve their misery on the walls. Lord Warwick made a puzzle of the family names, so subtle that no wit of man has yet been able to guess his secret. Two bears and a ragged staff, with his own name under them, stand in a frame of emblems; Roses, Acorns, Geraniums, Honeysuckles; which some folk fancy from the initial letters, may mean Robert, Ambrose, Guilford, and Henry; an explanation much too easy to be the true one. The rose may mean Ambrose; the oak, no doubt, is Robert. A sprig of oak, Lord Robert's own device, appears on another side of the room. Guilford could not forget that his wife was Queen; and solaced his captivity by carving the name of Jane.

Lord Robert was lodged in the lower room, on the ground-floor, while the Earl of Warwick and "King" Guilford, as men of higher note, were lodged in the upper room. During this period of separation, Lord Robert dug into the stone:

ROBERT DVDLEY

a name which may still be read near the door; cut into the wall by Amy Robsart's lord. After his trial, perhaps after Guilford's death, he was promoted to the upper room; on the wall of which he also left his mark, in the shape of an oak branch with the letters

R. D.

Jane was left alone with her gentlewomen, Elizabeth Tylney and Mistress Ellen, in the upper room of deputy Brydges' house; where she spent her days in reading the Greek Testament, and in grieving for her sire, whose love for her had brought his venerable head within reach of the fatal axe. Of herself she hardly thought, and of Guilford only as a starless boy, whose fate was married for a moment to her own. She had no such love for him, as she felt for her parents and her sisters. She had known him a few days only; she had married him as an act of obedience; she had never lived with him as a wife. She was little more than a child in years; but in six such summer weeks as she had now gone through, the characters of men are ripened fast. We know the Dudleys; and what was there in them for a girl like Jane to love?

Mary was now the Queen; and her triumph was understood as the victory of Spain. Renard, the crafty agent of her cousin, Charles the Fifth, became her chief adviser. Arundel, Pembroke, Paget, were consulted by the Queen, but the actual power was in Renard's hands. The blood to be shed was poured out, not on an English, but on a Spanish scale.

The Duke, the Marquis, and Lord Warwick, were brought to Westminster Hall for trial, where the aged Norfolk, white with years and sorrows, now freed from bonds, and restored in blood, presided as Lord High Steward, and pronounced the sentence of death on his cruel foe. Dudley, who could not deny that he had been in arms against Queen Mary, pleaded his commission under the Great Seal, and protested against the lords who had signed that commission judging him to death. Every one felt that he had made a point; but the peers were not open to legal points; and when he had made his protest, Norfolk declared that he must die.

Warwick and Northampton were also condemned to death. Warwick displayed a manly pride. Asked by Norfolk what he had to say in excuse of his treason, he answered that he stood by his father, that he accepted his doom, and had nothing to ask save that his debts might be paid out of his lost estates. Next day, Sir Andrew Dudley, the Duke's brother, Sir John Gates, Sir Thomas Palmer, and Sir Henry

Gates, were tried. They pleaded guilty; all except Palmer. "Can you deny that you were there?" asked the judge. "No," answered Sir Thomas. "Then you are culpable," returned the judge. "If that be so," said Palmer, "I confess the same." They were all condemned.

Monday, August 21, being named as the day on which the Duke must die, the guards were drawn up, the block was got ready, and the headsman waited with his axe. But the Duke made a feint, which put off the evil hour. He felt sore of mind on account of his change of faith; he had a great desire to hear mass, as in his boyish time; he begged to receive his Maker from the hands of a priest. Here was a change! To gain a few hours of life, the proud enemy of Rome was willing to become her slave. Arundel, who had never ceased to be a Catholic, snapped at the Duke's hint; sent for the Tower priest, and bade him prepare the altar in St. Peter's church. He also sent into Cheapside for twelve or fourteen merchants—Hartop, Newse, Baskerville, and others—to appear in the Queen's chapel by nine o'clock. This was to be a morning of sweet revenge. When all was ready, and the people seated, Sir John Gage, the old Constable, went to the Garden tower for the Duke; while Sir John Brydges, the lieutenant, went to Develin tower for the Marquis; and Thomas Brydges, the lieutenant's deputy, went to the Garden house for Sir Thomas Palmer. The Duke and Palmer had to pass under Lady Jane's window; and this young girl, who saw them go by, between the guards, heard with pain and shame, that to save their lives for a few hours these heroes of twenty battle-fields were going to hear mass.

When they were placed in the church, the priest began; saying his office in the usual way, with *Pax*, and blessing, and elevation of the host. On the wafer being offered to him, the Duke turned round to the people and said: "My masters, I let you all to understand that I do most faithfully believe this is the right and true way." Then he knelt before the priest and took the wafer into his mouth.

Those who had been fetched to see Dudley's act of humiliation, went away from St. Peter's church saying to each other, "Wist ye, friend, that it is forty-four years this day, since his father was put to death?"

Warwick, on hearing that his father had been to mass, sent for a priest and reconciled himself with Rome. Mary would probably have spared their lives; but Renard would not listen to her plea of mercy. Next day, the Duke, Sir John Gates, and Sir Thomas Palmer, were marched to Tower hill. At the block they declared themselves good Catholics; Dudley, most of all, appealing to the Bishop of Winchester, Nicholas Heath, who stood by him near the rail. They were buried in the Tower chapel; Dudley beneath the altar, the two knights at the west end.

Seven days after their execution, a citizen was dining with Thomas Brydges, in the Tower, when the Lady Jane chanced to come downstairs, from the upper room in which she lived, and seeing the good folk at table, said she would sit and dine with them. Her youth, her modesty, her tenderness took the stranger's eye, yet not so strongly as her piety and steadfastness took his heart.

"I pray you," asked Lady Jane, "have they mass in London?" "Yea, sooth," he answered, "in some places."

"It may be so," sighed Jane; "it is not so strange as the sudden conversion of the late Duke. For who would have thought he would have so done?"

"Perchance, he thereby hoped to have had his pardon."

"Pardon!" she flashed out; "pardon! Woe worth him! He hath brought me and our stock in miserable calamity by his exceeding ambition. Hoped for life by his turning! Though other men be of that opinion, I am not. What man is there living, I pray you, that would hope for life in that case:—being in the field against the Queen in person? Who was judge that he should hope for pardon?"

These good people, fired by her holy wrath, looked at the girl in love and wonder. "What will you more?" she cried. "Like as his life was wicked, so was his end. I pray God, that neither I nor friend of mine, die so." And then with kindling fervour she exclaimed:

"Should I, who am young and in my fewers (teens), forsake my faith for the love of life? Nay, God forbid. Much more *he* should not, whose fatal course, though he had lived his years, could not have long continued. But life is sweet. . . . God be merciful to us! He sayeth, Whoso denieth Him before men, He will not know him in His Father's kingdom."

When she rose from table, she thanked Brydges and the stranger for their company, and then retired with her gentlewoman to the Upper room.

Early in September the Tower received a new file of tenants; old rivals and enemies of Cardinal Fisher; three of the most eminent prelates in the English church: Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury; Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London; Hugh Latimer, once Bishop of Worcester. Latimer had been here before. On the green he met Rutter, one of the warders, to whom he cried, in that cheery voice which every one liked to hear, "What, my old friend, how do you? I am come to be your neighbour again." Latimer was lodged in the Garden house, which the apostate Palmer had now left. Cranmer was placed in that Garden tower, which was supposed to have broken Dudley's pride.

The kinsmen and councillors of Lady Jane had nearly all conformed to the new Queen's faith. Warwick, Lord Ambrose, and Lord Robert, had given way. Huntingdon and Northampton heard mass daily in St. Peter's church. Some favour was extended to all Jane's captives; Lady Warwick being allowed to see her husband in Beauchamp tower, and Lady Ambrose Dudley to visit her lord in the Nun's bower. Ambrose had license to walk on the leads over Coldharbour, and Guilford the same liberty on Beauchamp tower.

A priest was sent to Lady Jane, and confident hopes were expressed by those who knew nothing of her high nature, that she would follow the example of her masculine friends.

Time and peace were wanted for such a work; but time and peace were not to be found during Mary's reign. The experiment of converting Jane to the faith in which Dudley died, was rudely disturbed by events in Kent.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MEN OF KENT.

THE crypt of St. John's chapel in the White tower was the chief prison lodging of the masqueraders known in our annals as the Men of Kent.

On the jambs of a doorway leading to a cell in the solid wall, stand two rows of melancholy records.

HE THAT INDURETH TO THE ENDE
SHALL BE SAVID.
R. RUDSTON.
DAR. KENT. AN^{O}. 1553.

is the memorial of Robert Rudston, a young gentleman of Dartford, a picturesque town on the Old Kent Road.

BE FAITHFUL UNTO THE DETH AND I WILL
GIVE THEE A CROWNE OF LIFE.
T. FANE. 1554.

is the record left by Thomas Fane (properly Thomas Vane) a brother of Henry Fane of Hadlow, who was his fellow-prisoner in the crypt. This Henry was the grandfather of Sir Henry Vane the Elder.

T. CULPEPER OF AILSFORD. KENT.

is the inscription of Thomas Culpeper of Aylesford, a Crown manor which the Wyats of Allington Castle held by grant from the King.

These three inscriptions are plain enough, while others are defaced by time and damp. On one of the jambs some part of a tablet can still be read in a good light, bearing the name of Sir Thomas Wyat. One man of Kent was separated from his fellows in the crypt. In the slant of a window in Beauchamp tower a rude carving on a shield shows the name of

THOMAS COBHAM
1555.

This Thomas Cobham, whose proper name was Thomas Brooke, was the youngest son of George, Lord Cobham, of Couling Castle, a cousin of Sir Thomas Wyat, Captain of the insurgent host.

Why was Thomas Brooke separated from his fellows?

The frolic known as the Kentish rising was a political, not a dynastic threat. Wyat, a son of Sir Thomas of the Songs and Sonnets, a grandson of Sir Henry of the Cat, and of that stout Lady Wyat who had put the Abbot of Bexley in the stocks—is known as Sir Thomas of the Waster; his waster being a great cudgel, made of a brand, a piece of iron, and a length of thong, which the young gallant carried under his cloak, in the hope of laying it on the back of John Fitzwilliam, a wretch who had sent him word that it would be well to get rid of Queen Mary by either foul means or fair means. The Mercutio of the rising was a loyal man.

In youth, he had been gay and fractious; first in his father's house, where he lived in an atmosphere of wit and song; afterwards in France, where he served, not without credit, in the Wars against Charles the Fifth. The death of Edward the Sixth found him living at Allington Castle; a married man, with youngsters at his knee; fond of his hawks, his horses, and his dogs; but when Dudley put Queen Jane on the throne, Wyat went out into the field against him. Had Dudley triumphed, Wyat would have been hung as a rebel against Queen Jane; yet when the woman for whom he had risked his neck hinted her hope of contracting a Spanish marriage, the flighty passions of his youth rushed back into his veins. Had he not fought against the Spaniards at Landrecy? Was he to put his neck under the feet of a Spanish prince? Never, cried the thoughtless spark. Talking to his neighbours by the Yule logs, he found them no less eager than himself to oppose the projected match. Between the dinner and the dance, they put their heads together; and on the morrow these Twelfth Night revellers were a band of plotters moving into camp. Wyat was chosen Captain; just as the day before he might have been voted Lord of Misrule.

They fancied that a scuffle and riot would serve their turn; checking the plans of Renard, and forcing the Queen to dismiss her project of a Spanish match. They meant no harm to Mary; they hoped to do her good; nay, they expected her to stand aside, and let the English faction and the Spanish faction fight it out.

Among the first to throw in their lot with Wyat were Robert Rudston, Thomas Culpeper, Henry and Thomas Fane, gentlemen of family and estate, who were quickly followed by Sir Harry Isely, Sir George Harper, Cuthbert Vaughan, and many more. Wyat strove to persuade George, Lord Cobham of Couling, to join them; but Cobham, a rich and timid man, sent his son Thomas into Wyat's camp, while he wrote to the Queen's council a full account of what was being done. These Brookes were Catholics, deeply attached to the Catholic Queen.

The rioters, who soon became an army, rang the church-bells in every town, seized Rochester Castle, and mounted guard on the Medway bridge. Norfolk was now sent down to disperse the mob; but the aged warrior, pale from his cell, was no longer the man of Flodden and of Doncaster Bridge; and when the levies which he led into Kent heard that the Kentish men were up in arms, not against their Queen, but only against the Spanish match, they deserted their general, threw down their flag, and shouting "A Wyat! a Wyat!" went over to his side. "So many as will come and tarry with us shall be welcome," cried the gay leader, as he rode through the deserters' ranks; "and as many as will depart, good leave have they." A few fell back; men of the Queen's guard, who returned to London in wretched plight; their bows broken, their scabbards empty, their coats turned inside out. When these scarecrows passed through the gateway of London Bridge, on their way back to the Tower, the citizens of Cheap, who thought the Queen must surely give way about the match, ran mad with joy.

Renard was now alarmed; and he wished the Queen to leave London; but Mary never had a moment's fear. She had spies in Allington and Rochester, in Wyat's house and in his camp; spies who reported to her council everything that was either done or likely to be done. In place of yielding the match, Mary mounted her horse, rode into the city, harangued the citizens in Guildhall, declared her purpose to proceed, proclaimed Wyat a rebel, and bade the well-wishers to his cause go join him, offering them a free passage through the gates of London Bridge into Kent.

On the day of her proclamation, Wyat was in Dartford, the next day in Greenwich. The game was now close. Early on Candlemas-day a gentleman came dashing up the Kent Road, accompanied by a drummer; and being stopped by the picket near St. George's Church, he said he had a message for the Queen's general, the Earl of Pembroke. With a band round his eyes and a drummer by his side, he was led on foot through the City to Coldharbour, Lord Pembroke's residence, where he remained in secret parley until the afternoon, when he was brought out again with the band round his eyes and the drummer by his side, and led back to St. George's Church. No one but the Queen's council knew his name. When he was gone from Coldharbour, Pembroke rode out, attended by Lord William Howard, the Queen's stout deputy of Calais, followed by fifty men; passed over London Bridge; and went up the High Street, Southwark, as far as St. George's Church. Everything was quiet. They put a number of Lord William's men in the Tabard and other taverns much used by the men of Kent, and then rode back to court.

On her side, Mary offered a pardon to such of her good subjects as would lay down their arms at once, with the four exceptions of Wyat, Rudston, Harper, and Isely, and a reward for any man who would take Wyat, of a hundred pounds a year to himself and his heirs for ever.

Next day rebel flags were seen from the Belfry and the keep; the Kentish men marching lightly towards the bridge, two thousand strong, with many good pieces in their train. No attempt was made to stop them. The Queen's troops, posted near St. George's Church, fell back to the bridge, the chains of which were cut and the gates made safe. The men left by Lord William in the taverns, went over to the rebels, and Southwark was surrendered to Wyat without a blow. Sir John Brydges said they ought to go out from the Tower and fight; but Pembroke, who knew his own business, refused to stir.

Panic ran through the city, in which the shops were closed, the church-bells rung, and the gates secured against surprise. Pembroke sent Lord William to the bridge for a parley. "Wyat, Wyat!" cried Lord William from the gate. "What would ye with the Captain?" asked a Kentish man. "I would speak with him," quoth Lord William. "The Captain is not here," said the other; "but if ye will anything to him, I will show it." "Marry, then," returned Lord William; "know of him what he meaneth by this invasion, and whether he continue in his purpose?"

In less than an hour the Kentish man came back to the bridge with a purse in his hand, which he threw over the gate, saying, "There, in that ye will find the Captain's answer." Wyat required on behalf of the Kentish men no less than that the Queen should give up her project of a Spanish match, and that she should yield to him the Tower as a pledge of her good faith. There must have been peals of laughter in the supper-rooms of the Tower that night.

Mary's spirit seemed to rise as the peril pressed around her. She raised on the keep a flag, which the diarists describe as a banner of defiance, and gave orders that the morning and evening guns should be fired off as they were fired in times of peace on the change of guard; nay, she affected a sudden tenderness for people who are seldom much cared for by princes in time of war. Poynings, one of her gunners, came to tell her he could beat down some houses across the river, and bury many of the rebels in the crash. "Nay," said the Queen, like a queen, "that were great pity; for many poor men and householders will be undone and killed." Charity on her side seemed to beget chivalry on the other. A fanatic, named William Thomas, a man of good parts, whom the times had driven mad, made a proposal for taking off the Queen, as the simplest way to get rid of the Spanish match. This proposal was made known by John Fitzwilliam, one of Norfolk's men, not to Wyat, who would have pinked the rascal on the spot, but through third and fourth parties, by whom it came at length to the Captain's ears. Wyat then cut his Waster, a thick stick, through which he burnt a hole and fastened a length of thong. With this waster in hand, he sought a whole day for the rascal who talked of laying hands on his Queen. Failing to find Fitzwilliam, Wyat gave the cudgel to a servant, and bade him seek the fellow out, saying, "Bob him well, for the knave is a spy, and therefore be bold to beat him."

In this lightsome and generous spirit he acted from first to last. When he heard that the Queen had promised a hundred pounds a year for ever to any man who should take him, he wrote his name in big letters on a scroll and gaily stuck it in his cap.

A flight of romantic pity led to his ruin. One of Sir John Brydges' men was passing down the river in his barge, when a waterman whom he knew, a poor fellow from Tower stairs, called to him from the bank to take him on board. Now, passage from one side of the Thames to the other was forbidden, and when the Kentish gunners saw the Tower barge taking a man on board against the agreement, they fired a volley into her, and the waterman fell dead. Brydges, maddened by what he thought an insult to his barge, opened fire from the keep, the Devil's tower, and the Water gate, not only against the wooden houses on Horselydown, but against the steeples of St. Mary's Church and St. Olave's Church. The poor people whose sheds were rattling into pieces, ran to Wyat; the men in rage, the women in tears; and begged him to save them from destruction. "Sir," they cried in terror, "we shall be utterly undone for your sake: our houses, which are our living, will be thrown down, our children will be slain, this borough will be desolated: for the love of God, take pity on us!" Wyat is said to have paused for a long time. What they asked of him was to give up all the advantages of his position, in order to save the Queen's subjects from the violence of her lieutenant. A soldier would have packed them home with an oath; a statesman would have sent them to the Queen. But the light-hearted Captain could not stand a woman's tears. "I pray you, my friends," he said, "content yourselves a little. I will ease you of this mischief. God forbid that ye, nay, the least child here, should be hurt in my behalf."

Wyat had only one choice; either to fall back on Rochester, confess his failure, and wait for some luckier moment; or, by a forced and fatiguing march to Kingston, get across the Thames higher up, and march on the capital by the northern bank. He chose the more dashing plan.

Paying every one his due, so that no man lost a penny by his bands, he marched his forces through the marshes of Lambeth and Wandsworth, towards the old Saxon town, which he reached the same night; to find the bridge broken down, the boats all moored on the Middlesex side, and the passage secured by two hundred of the Queen's troops. What was he to do? He could not pause; neither could he fall back. Southwark was occupied in his rear. What was in front, he could not tell; but come what would he must now push forward. Two of his guns were trailed to the bridge, and the soldiers swept away. Three or four Medway swimmers sprang into the flood, swam across the stream under fire, unfastened the boats, and paddled them over to the Kingston bank. Into these frail craft a few of the Kentish men leapt—only a few, and these had to leave their horses and artillery behind. Yet Wyat could not wait. On foot, half armed, and panting with fatigue, some broken companies pressed on through that dark February night. Before day they were at Brentford—hungry, worn, and sleepless, with a royal army in their front.

The Queen was in high spirits; for these masquers who were falling into her nets, might be used to involve in treason personages whom she wished to strike and could not reach.

Drums were beaten in the streets at four o'clock, and London was astir that winter night from Westminster to the Tower. A thousand preparations had been made, and every point of the City, from Islington ward to St. James's Fields, was bristling with pikes and guns. Renard urged the Queen to keep out of peril. The citizens were known to be with Wyat; but the chief men were being watched, while common folk were deceived with lies and overawed with force. From the Tower to Charing-cross the series of positions were strongly manned. Lord William Howard, a stout soldier, was at Ludgate with his guards; Lord Chidiock Pawlett, son of the Lord Treasurer, held Fleet street and the bridge with three hundred men; Sir John Gage, the Lord Chamberlain, was at Charing-cross with a thousand pikes; Pembroke, the Queen's general, was at Whitehall, under the Palace window, with his line of battle fronting St. James's park. If these men were true, all would be well; but Renard was fearful lest they should play their mistress false.

Faint in limb, but high in spirit, the Kentish men pushed on from Brentford to Hyde Park corner. Some of their great pieces, which had been lugged across the river, came up, and, being planted on Constitution-hill, opened fire on Pembroke's lines. With a few brave words to his men, Wyat, and his cousin Cobham, pressed forward on foot down the old lane by St. James's Church, marched along the front of Pembroke's horse, who sat motionless in their seats, until they arrived at Charing-cross. There they met Sir John Gage, who fired upon them and fell back. Wyat pushed up the Strand, his object being to reach the Tower. In Fleet street he met Lord Chidiock and the Queen's troops, who suffered him to pass. The rout went on, and the Lord of Misrule seemed coming to the Tower. But he found himself in a trap on Ludgate Hill, where the deputy of Calais plucked from his temples the paper crown.

With a loud clatter the Kentish men came up to Ludgate. "A Wyat! a Wyat!" they cried to the guards. Lord William stood upon the gate, and to his questions they replied—"Here is Wyat, to whom the Queen hath granted our requests." "Avaunt thee, traitor," cried Lord Williams; "thou shalt not come in here." Wyat had no guns to force the gate. Dying with hunger and fatigue, he sat on a stone near the

Belle Sauvage for awhile; then, jumping to his feet, he marched his men back over the Fleet bridge, as far as Temple Bar, where the Queen's troops were now drawn up. A fight began, which lasted a few minutes only; for William Harvey, the herald, in his coat-of-arms, coming forward, said to Wyat—"Sir, you were best to yield; the day is gone against you. Perchance the Queen will be merciful, the rather if ye stint the flow of blood." Wyat turned to his men, who said they would fight it out; but on seeing that the play was over, he gave up his sword. Sir Maurice Berkeley took him up behind on his horse, and carried him in triumph to Whitehall.

At five o'clock, Wyat was at the Tower gates a prisoner. Taking him through the wicket, Sir John Brydges, flourishing his blade in his hand, cried, "Oh, thou villain and traitor, if it was not that the law must pass upon thee, I would stick thee through with my dagger." The Captain was very quiet. "It is no mastery now," said Wyat, in scorn, and passed into his cell. He wore a coat of mail, with rich sleeves; a velvet cassock, covered with yellow lace; high boots and spurs; and a velvet hat, adorned with very fine lace. The sword and dirk were gone.

Cobham, Rudston, and the two Fanes were brought into the Tower; and a few days later, Thomas Culpeper, Sir Henry Isely, and many more, including Edward Courtney, the White Rose of York.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COURTNEY.

EDWARD COURTNEY, the White Rose of York, was born to a captive's fate. From the age of twelve, when he was first removed from his father's house to the Tower, until he died in Padua at the age of twenty-nine, he had only twenty months of freedom.

Courtney's father, Henry, Earl of Devon and Marquis of Exeter, was born too near the purple for his peace; being a son of Princess Catharine, daughter of Edward the Fourth. These Courtneys had been a splendid race; robbers, crusaders, paladins; bearing the arms of Boulogne, and tracing their lineage to the blood royal of France. Some members of this great house had been Counts of Edessa, Kings of Jerusalem, Emperors of the East. One had married into the house of Capet, another into that of Plantagenet; but the Courtneys had never yet made a royal and imperial match without bringing down the skies upon their house. They dated their decline in France from the day when they gave one of their daughters to a son of Louis the Fat. Peter of Courtney's union with Yolande of Constantinople, though it brought the purple to three princes of the house, put an end to their greatness in the East. When William Courtney, eighteenth Earl of Devon, took the Princess Catharine to wife, he provided for all who were to follow him a dark inheritance—the Tower, the headsman's axe, and the poisoned bowl. William had passed seven years of his married life a prisoner in the Tower. Henry, Princess Catharine's son, had been executed, along with his cousin, Lord Montagu, for his share in the plot of Cardinal Pole. Edward, his boy, then twelve years old, was left a prisoner in the Tower.

When the great party of York, which had been stunned, but not killed, at Bosworth, began to raise its head once more, it had found in Henry Courtney, Earl of Devon, Marquis of Exeter, grandson of Edward the Fourth, young, dashing, handsome, one of those men who cannot help being made a rallying sign. Exeter was a Catholic, a friend of Reginald Pole. In secret he was called the White Rose of York; nay, it is probable—as Henry the Eighth alleged—that he had dreamt of one day wearing a royal crown. Indeed, his claims were strong; for he stood next in order of succession to the King and his sisters; and thus he had come to be regarded as a natural chief by all those partisans of the ancient church who could not travel so fast and far as the new primate and the new queen. These partisans were neither few in number nor obscure in rank. A majority of the people were unlettered peasants, and a majority of the great barons were known to be on the Catholic side. The burghers and scholars, with a majority of the freeholders, were on the Reformers' side. In any trial by battle, the issue of a conflict between the two opinions might have been doubtful, and the presence of such chiefs as Henry Courtney and Reginald Pole had made a resort to arms seem easy, and almost lawful, in the eyes of turbulent men.

Such a kinsman could only be left in peace, by such a king as Henry the Eighth, on one engagement, and that engagement Exeter either would not or could not take. He must have kept aloof from public affairs. But, far from hiding his light in his own house, Exeter had assumed in London the bearing of a prince, while in his own counties of Devon and Cornwall he had set himself high above the law. Henry grew angry, not without cause; and on the eve of a movement which threatened to become a general rising in the west, Exeter and his son Edward, a boy of twelve, had been seized and thrown into the Tower; whence a short trial and a shorter shrift had conducted the luckless son of Princess Catharine to the block.

The boy was spared. Shorn of his honours and estates, Courtney underwent the fate which, in those rude times, was known as being forgotten in the Tower.

For fifteen years the grandson of Princess Catharine remained a captive. While he was still a boy, he ran about the garden and the Lieutenant's house. As he grew in years, in beauty, and intelligence, his high blood was put into the scale against him; his freedom was abridged; and the pale pretender to the name of White Rose was lodged for safety in the strong room of the Belfry; where his chief amusement was to watch the gunners fire their pieces, to count the ships going up and down the Thames, to pace the stones on Prisoners' Walk.

He was treated as a man of no high mark; having only a common servant at 6s. a week to wait on him; being dieted and lodged at 26s. 8d. a week; while young men of his quality, such as Guilford and Ambrose Dudley, were dieted at 53s. 4d. a week, and allowed two servants each.

Not until the two reforming kings, Henry and Edward, had passed away, and his Catholic kinswoman, Princess Mary, succeeded to the throne, was Courtney freed from his confinement in the strong room.

The twenty months of freedom which he was now to enjoy were months of very high favour and very warm hope. It seemed likely that the child on whose early life fortune had shed her darkest clouds would be called to wear a matrimonial crown.

On the new Queen riding down to the Tower, in front of a proud cavalcade of nobles and prelates, she found at the postern of her citadel a row of kneeling figures. Halting the procession, she got down from her palfrey, and clasped them in her arms. For among these kneeling figures, who had been suffered to come forth from their cells, many were dear to her heart and servants to her cause; the aged Duke of Norfolk, the Primate Gardiner, the Duchess of Somerset, the young Lord Courtney. Mary stooped to these applicants for her grace, and kissed them one by one. "These are my prisoners," she exclaimed, as she carried them from the outer gates into the royal gallery. The scene was a stage device; but the effect on the popular mind was great. Courtney, for example, had been free for three months; yet he had come down to the gates that day, to receive the royal kiss, and to play his part in a striking act.

A very wild dream now filled the young man's soul with hope. He was popular in the city and in the court, not only on account of his royal blood and his personal beauty, but more on account of the tenderness felt for a youth who had done no wrong, and suffered much pain. The world had been very hard to him; and a generous people wished to make amends for the bitterness of his early life. Pale with long vigils, his beauty had that soft and melancholy cast which takes captive the eyes of women. When he came out of the Belfry, at the age of twenty-six, he found himself high in favour. He was, in fact, the man whom nearly all true lovers of their country wished to see married to their Queen.

Mary herself, though she was nearly old enough to have been his mother, was not blind to her cousin's claims, and she more than once thought seriously of the proposal ere she fixed her mind for good and evil on the Prince of Spain. During her day of doubt she poured favours enough on Courtney to turn his head. She made him Earl of Devon, Parliament restored the Marquisate of Exeter to his house, and in dress, habit, and hospitality, he was encouraged to adopt a style beyond that of a private person. He gave himself the airs of a prince. He smiled on the Yorkist barons, and allowed his flatterers to call him the true White Rose. Even after Mary had engaged herself to Philip, he fancied the foreign project of alliance would pass away, and that the Queen would accept no husband but himself. To the amusement of men knowing better, he talked of his approaching nuptials, and ordered a magnificent suit of bridal clothes.

His fortunes fell when Mary got a promise from Renard that she should wed the Spanish Prince. She was asked by Renard to make many sacrifices ; one of which was the pale and foolish youth who had lived so many years in the Belfry. Mary, left to herself, would have done the boy no harm ; but Renard told her that when Courtney ceased to be her lover, he could not help becoming her rival. He stood too near. At first, the Queen could see no peril to her throne in the pretensions of such a youth ; but Renard, who knew better than Mary what men were saying in the Cheapside taverns and St. Paul's Churchyard, began to whisper in her ear that after her marriage with Philip the young Lord Courtney would be a dangerous man, if not on his own account, yet on account of her sister, for whom there was a powerful party in her realm. He spoke the truth. So soon as Mary's contract with the Prince of Spain was made known in London, people began to busy their minds about a second union. They married Courtney to Elizabeth. Mary, they said, would have no son ; at thirty-nine she was too old ; the crown must come to her younger sister ; and since Courtney was set up by many as the White Rose, it would be well to end all feuds and heal all sores between White and Red by wedding the Lancastrian princess to the Yorkist peer.

All this tattle was repeated day by day to the Queen. Mary felt that her people were avenging her Spanish match, by proposing to themselves an English match. It was hardly necessary for Renard to hint that a marriage of Elizabeth and Courtney would be dangerous to her throne. Yet he urged it in her ear from day to day. Nothing, he told Mary, could make her mistress of her kingdom, and secure to her the lover she had chosen, but the ruin of these two pretenders to her crown and state.

Unlike her Spanish councillor, Mary had touches of human pity. If she feared to act against her sister, then a young girl of twenty, bright with her first beauty, witty and debonair, she still more disliked to crush with her strong hand the poor boy whom she had loved and kissed. The youth soon helped her to decide. Fancying himself neglected by the Queen, he fell into bad ways; carousing in City taverns, keeping loose company, running after strange faces, hanging on the skirts of men known to be engaged in plots. The austere lady grew angry and ashamed. Courtney repented, and was half forgiven. It is not clear, whether, in some of his pranks, he was not acting a part. Some think he became one of Renard's spies. When Wyat marched on Charing-cross, his conduct was suspicious, if it were nothing worse; and his arrest, along with the crowd of rioters, may have been a blind on Renard's part to conceal the deeper infamy of his course.

CHAPTER XIX.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN.

ON the day of her triumph, as Mary sat brooding in her closet, listening fitfully to Renard, she consented to give up her cousin, if not her sister, to the minister of Charles the Fifth. Jane had been sentenced by the court and reprieved by time. Seven months had passed since her nine days' reign was over; the author of her offence had paid the penalties of his crime; and in the recent stir no man had even breathed her name. Her youth, her innocence, her beauty, had won all hearts to her; even those of Father Feckenham the Queen's confessor, and Sir John Brydges the Queen's lieutenant. But Renard called for blood; and Mary was little more than a scribe in Renard's hands.

That day, on the eve of which Queen Mary sat in her closet with her Spanish councillor, was Ash Wednesday; and Mary, on consenting that her cousin should not live forty hours longer, called to her presence Father Feckenham, whom she had just made Dean of St. Paul's and Abbot of Westminster; and bade him go to the deputy's house in the Tower, with news that Lady Jane must die, and see what could be done to save her soul. Father Feckenham, though a coarse man, was not a bad man. As a divine, he was learned and ingenious; one in whose power of dealing with backsliders the Queen had a boundless faith.

That he failed with Lady Jane, that he got angry with her, that his speeches to her made him hateful in the eyes of men, were more his misfortunes than they were his faults. A good deal must be allowed to a man who honestly thinks he has power to bind and to loose, in his dealing with those who in his opinion are trifling with the fate of immortal souls.

Feckenham, who brought down his message of death to the Tower, was startled to see that girl receive his news with a sad and welcome smile. It seemed to him out of nature, almost out of grace. He spoke to her of her soul; of the sins of men; of the need for repentance; but he found her calm and happy, at peace with the world, and at one with God. He talked to her first of faith, of liberty, of holiness; then of the sacraments, the Scriptures, and the universal Church. She knew all these things better than himself; and she held a language about them far beyond his reach. With a sweet patience, she put an end to the debate by saying that since she had only a few hours now to live she needed them all for prayer.

The Dean was moved, as men of his order are seldom moved. Convert this girl in a day! Worn as he was in church affairs, he knew that no skill of his would be able, in one winter day, to avail him against one who combined a scholar's learning with a woman's wit. If her soul was to be saved—and the Father was anxious to save her soul—that order for her execution on Friday morning must be stayed. With a sweet voice pulsing in his ear, he rowed back to Whitehall, and told the vindictive Queen, with the bold energy of a priest, that her orders for that execution on Friday must be withdrawn. With much ado, the Queen gave way; but she feared the anger of Feckenham even more than that of Renard; and the puzzled Father went back to the Tower, to resume his task. Jane was kind but cold. She had no use for him and his precepts in her final hour on earth. His going to court about her sentence gave her pain. She did not want to die; at seventeen no one wants to die; but she did not like the Queen to add one day to her life, under the hope that she would act as Dudley and Warwick had done, in giving up their faith. That was a sacrifice she could never make. When Feckenham told her the warrants for Friday were recalled, she merely said she was willing to die, if the Queen, her cousin, was minded to put the law in force against her. For the rest, she only wanted to be left alone.

"You are not to die to-morrow," he persisted.

"You are much deceived," said Jane, "if you think I have any desire of longer life."

When Feckenham returned to the Queen with a report of his second interview, Mary became wild with rage. She bade her secretaries draw up warrants for her death. She sent for Grey, who was a prisoner in the country. There were ways of adding bitterness to death, and Mary studied and employed them all. She could separate the husband from his wife in their last moments; she could march Guilford under Lady Jane's window, as he went by to execution; she could drive the cart with his dead body past her door; she could prepare a scaffold on the open green, under Lady Jane's eyes; she could bring up Grey to see his daughter slain; she could refuse to let her have a minister of her own faith to pray with her; she could send her Jesuits and confessors to disturb the solemnity of her final night on earth. All these things she could do, and she did; and all these things must have been of Mary's will.

Renard required that Jane should be put away; that sacrifice was wanting to confirm the conquest made by Spain; but Renard could have no motive for adding to the bitterness of her death.

The priests sent down by Mary to the Tower were Lady Jane's worst tormentors. They would not be denied; they pushed past her women; and when they got into her chamber, they would not go away.

The long reports which have been printed of their contention with her, may not be exact; but they have that rough kind of likeness to the truth which a common rumour bears to an actual fact. When Feckenham was tired out with argument, he is said to have exclaimed, "Madam, I am sorry for you; I am assured we shall not meet again." To which Jane is said to have answered, "It is most true, sir; we shall never meet again, unless God should turn your heart;" not a word of which "happy retort," we may be sure, ever passed the lips of Lady Jane.

The tussle on the Bread and Wine was no doubt sharp, for that was the dogma most in dispute. "Do you deny that Christ is present in the bread and wine?" "The broken bread," said Jane, "reminds me of the Saviour broken for my sins, the wine reminds me of the blood shed on the cross." She meant to say that Christ was ministerially, but not bodily, present in the bread and wine. "But did He not say," put in the Father, "Take, eat, this is My body?" "Yes," she answered, "just as He said, I am the vine." It was a figure, not a fact.

Feckenham at length retired, and Jane withdrew into the upper chamber, to compose her mind; to write a farewell to her father, and to wait on God in prayer.

She was not aware that her father had been arrested, still less that he was on his way to the Tower. The tender note which she addressed to him ended in these words:

"Thus, good father, I have opened unto you the state wherein I stand: my death at hand; to you, perhaps, it may seem woeful; yet to me there is nothing can be more welcome than from this rule of misery to aspire to that heavenly throne with Christ my Saviour, in whose steadfast faith (if it may be lawful for the daughter so to write to the father) the Lord continue to keep you, so at the last we may meet in heaven."

When it was known in the Tower that warrants were out, and that Jane would die on Monday morning, every one became eager to get some token from her, to catch a last word from her lips, a final glance from her eye. To Thomas Brydges, the deputy, in whose house she had lived nearly eight months, she gave a small book of devotions, bound in vellum, containing two scraps of her writing, and a few words by Lord Guilford; one of her notes being addressed to Brydges himself, in words which must have gone to his soul: "Call upon God to incline your heart to His laws, to quicken you in His way, and not to take the word of truth utterly out of your mouth."

On Sunday, Guilford sent to ask her for a final interview; but this sad parting she declined, as useless now, fit for stage heroes only, which they were not. She bade him be of good cheer; and seeing how weak he had been, it is only right to say that the poor boy took his fate quietly, like a man. Sunday morning she spent in prayer and reading; her book, a copy of the Greek Testament; in which she observed a blank leaf at the end, and taking up her pen, wrote some last words to her darling sister, Lady Catharine Grey, sad heiress of all her rights and miseries:

"I have sent you, good sister Kate, a book of which, although it be not outwardly rimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is more worth than precious stones. It is the book, dear sister, of the law of the Lord; His testament and last will, which He bequeathed to us wretches, which shall lead you to eternal joy."

Closing the sacred book, she gave it to Elizabeth Tylney, her gentlewoman, praying her to carry it after she was dead to Lady Catharine, as the last and best token of her love. She then composed herself to prayer.

Early next day, before it was yet light, the carpenters were heard beneath her window, fitting up the block on which she was to die. When she looked out upon the green, she saw the archers and lancers drawn up, and Guilford being led away from the Lieutenant's door. She now sat down and waited for her summons to depart. An hour went slowly by; and then her quick ear caught the rumble of a cart on the stones. She knew that this cart contained poor Guilford's body, and she rose to greet the corse as it passed by. Her women, who were all in tears, endeavoured to prevent her going to the window, from which she could not help seeing the block and headsman waiting for her turn ; but she gently forced them aside, looked out on the cart, and made the dead youth her last adieu.

Brydges and Feckenham now came for her. Her two gentlewomen could hardly walk for weeping; but Lady Jane, who was dressed in a black gown, came forth, with a prayer-book in her hand, a heavenly smile on her face, a tender light in her grey eyes. She walked modestly across the green, passed through the files of troopers, mounted the scaffold, and then turning to the crowd of spectators, softly said :—

"Good people, I am come hither to die. The fact against the Queen's highness was unlawful ; but touching the procurement and desire thereof by me, or on my behalf, I wash my hands thereof, in innocency, before God, and in the face of you, good Christian people, this day."

She paused, as if to put away from her the world, with which she had now done for ever. Then she added :—

"I pray you all, good Christian people, to bear me witness that I die a true Christian woman, and that I look to be saved by no other means than the mercy of God, in the merits of the blood of His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, good people, while I am alive, I pray you to assist me with your prayers." Kneeling down, she said to Feckenham, the only divine whom Mary would allow to come near her, "Shall I say this psalm?" The Abbot faltered, "Yes." On which she repeated, in a clear voice, the noble psalm: "Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness: according to the multitude of Thy mercies do away mine offences."

When she had come to the last line, she stood up on her feet, and took off her gloves and kerchief, which she gave to Elizabeth Tylney. The Book of Psalms she gave to Thomas Brydges, the Lieutenant's deputy. Then she untied her gown, and took off her bridal gear. The headsman offered to assist her; but she put his hands gently aside, and drew a white kerchief round her eyes. The veiled figure of the executioner sank at her feet, and begged her forgiveness for what he had now to do. She whispered in his ear a few soft words of pity and pardon; and then said to him openly, "I pray you despatch me quickly." Kneeling before the block, she felt for it blindly with her open fingers. One who stood by her touched and guided her hand to the place which it sought; when she laid down her noble head, and saying, "Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," passed, with the prayer on her lips, into her everlasting rest.

CHAPTER XX.

CRANMER, LATIMER, RIDLEY.

THE fact of Cranmer having been lodged in the Gate house, once known as the Garden tower, now as the Bloody tower, has not been noted by the thousand and one historians of his age. It was recorded at the time by a resident in the Tower whose diary is still extant; and the fact now tardily recovered from the waste of time, may throw some light on a story which is confessed to be one of the puzzling pages in a great man's life.

From the day of his arrest, Cranmer appeared in a new part. He had never been deemed a coward. Even those who loved him least had given him credit for the virtues and the passions of a genuine man. As a student and a priest, he had been daring and original in a high degree. He had thought for himself. He had thwarted and opposed his clerical superiors. He had been bold enough to marry, not once, but twice. When every one else hung back in doubt as to the best way of dealing with the great divorce, his learning gave the clue, and his spirit supplied the force, by which Henry was delivered from his matrimonial chains. Since that time he had passed through a thousand of those trials which are said to temper and steel men's minds. He had sent brave knights to the block. He had knelt by the feet of dying queens. He had watched the flames lick up the flesh of martyred saints. Nothing in his course of life led any one to suspect that he feared to die. Up to the very hour of his arrest in council, his conduct had been stout; for, knowing how Queen Mary loathed him, he did not falter; and hearing of her march on London he did not fly. What hindered him from passing into France! To the friends who urged his flight, he proudly said, It was fit that he should stay, considering the post he held, and show that he was not afraid to own the changes which had been made in the late King's time.

Yet, from the day when he was seized and clapped in the Garden tower, his stomach began to fail. Brave old Latimer lay in the adjoining Garden house; and in a room which he could see from his window, dwelt the young and innocent Lady Jane. But the soul which animated Latimer and Lady Jane appears to have been scared out of Cranmer in that hour of need. No doubt the hardships of his cell were great; for the winter months were cold; and though he dined with the Lieutenant, he was probably kept without a fire. Cranmer could not treat his situation as a theme for jokes. How could he tell whether some new Forrest might not break upon his sleep? He heard that the Queen was thirsting for his blood; he knew that Renard, a minister to whom the assassin's knife was a familiar thought, was at her side. Yet seeing that the primate felt no hope, it would have been manlier in him to affect no fear. The Queen, knowing how much he had been her enemy and her mother's enemy, was in no mood to forget her wrongs. Indeed, those wrongs were not of a kind which lonely and unhappy women like Mary can forgive; since they touched the honour of her birth, and the purity of her mother's name. With the dark blood, and the brooding passions of her mother's race, Mary had the strength to bear, but not the virtue to forbear. Nor, in such a case as hers, could a woman be expected to see the merit of an act of grace. Not only had this man's crafty brain suggested the scheme by which Catharine could be put away, but his audacious tongue had summoned that royal lady to his court, and on her failure to obey had given his judgment of divorce against her; branding her child, now queen, as a bastard; telling her, as a man of God, that while she had been calling herself Henry's wife, she had been actually wallowing in mortal sin. Could such an offender be forgiven? Mary told her Spanish adviser that until Cranmer was in the Tower she had never known one joyful day.

In the middle of September he was lodged in the Bloody tower. Winter was coming on; and his health began to droop. In November, he was suffered to leave his cell and walk in the garden below, under Latimer's window. The winter was so cold, that Latimer sent his servant to tell the Lieutenant, with pathetic humour, that unless he took more care he would give him the slip. When Sir John Brydges, fearing lest the prelate meant to escape, ran from his pleasant fireside to the Garden house, the good old man assured him there was no cause for fear. "They mean," he said, "to burn me; now unless you give me some wood in my chamber I shall die of cold."

On the arrest of Wyat and the Kentish men, the London prisons were so choked with inmates that many of the city churches had to be used as jails. One church received four hundred captives. The Tower, especially, overflowed. Little Ease was crammed, and many of the Kentish gentlemen were thrust into the crypt. Some clergymen were sent to Newgate, some to the Fleet. Among other changes of cells and prisoners, Ridley and Latimer were put into Cranmer's room in the Garden tower; an opportunity of which they had never dreamt, and of which they made the highest use. Thrown together in the Garden tower, they kept up each other's spirits, by holding conferences on faith and works, which their friends found means to copy down and print. At Sir John Brydges' table, to which they walked by way of the wall terrace, afterwards known as Raleigh's walk, they met the Queen's confessor, Feckenham, who talked to them of the bread and wine, as he had done with Lady Jane, and strove to entrap them by his crafty words. Above all, they searched the Scriptures in their lonely rooms; but instead of finding in Holy Writ the evidence in proof of a bodily presence in the bread and wine, they satisfied their souls that mass could never be offered as a sacrifice for sin.

Yet Mary's end was gained, in some degree. The cold and misery of the Bloody tower broke Cranmer's spirit, as it had helped in some degree to break Dudley's spirit; so that the priest who, in Lambeth, had been little less than a hero, became, when he was removed to Oxford, little better than a craven. Mary felt that in Cranmer she could humiliate the Reformation. And she was right. The high deeds of many years have not sufficed to cover the weakness of a day, when the chosen champion of religious freedom set his seal to a recantation and denial of the most cherished sentiments of his life.

The only excuse that can be made for Cranmer is, that his flesh was frail, that he was greatly tried, that his denial was drawn from him, as it were, on the rack. When he found the Queen obdurate, he withdrew his denial, and met his death like a martyr. Peace to his soul!

Latimer and Ridley also passed through fire to their Father's house.

* * *

CHAPTER XXI.

WHITE ROSES.

ON the removal of Cranmer to Oxford the Garden tower received Edward Courtney, the hapless White Rose of York.

"You here again, my lord?" said Brydges, as the boat pushed in. "How is this?"

"Truly I cannot tell, unless I should accuse myself; let the world judge."

He was placed at once in the Garden tower, to see whether any fact would turn up against him in the Wyat trials. His peril lay in his royal blood; his offence was in Renard's fear; an offence which, only a few days later, brought Elizabeth herself to the Strong Room. Renard insisted on these arrests being made; arrests, he said, which were essential to Mary's peace; arrests, he knew, which were essential to the policy then pursued by Spain.

In the dull seclusion of the Tower, Sir Thomas Wyat had become another man to what he had been at Rochester and Southwark. Gardiner, who had become, next after Renard, the Queen's chief councillor, spoke of him with scorn, as "little Wyat, a bastard of no substance." On his trial, Wyat hinted that there were higher traitors than himself; and his words were enough to justify Renard in urging the arrest of Elizabeth. Wyat said he had sent a letter to the Princess Elizabeth, praying her to get as far from

London as she could; and that the Princess had sent him thanks for his goodwill, saying she would act as she found cause. He said he had been in correspondence with Lord Courtney, who had told him to proceed in his course. He said he was called the Captain, but that four or five others ranked above him in the camp.

Who were these others? "Elizabeth first, and Courtney next," said Renard. Both were sent to the Tower, in the hope that matter could be drawn from the "little Bastard" which might warrant a jealous Queen in taking both their lives.

For the moment every one turned to Wyat. Sir John Brydges, the Lieutenant, worked upon his love of life and his fear of death; and, sad to say, the dashing young knight, who had once stuck the scroll in his cap, to tempt an assassin's blow, now listened to the Lieutenant's words. Under skilful treatment, he seemed willing to become a tool. He hinted at grave matters. He affected much knowledge. When the council met in the Lieutenant's house, he was brought before them, as one having high secrets in his keeping, which her Majesty ought to know. Before this council he made a charge against Courtney, and raised a suspicion against Elizabeth, which threw these personages into Renard's power.

The Queen was so much pleased with Brydges, that she sent him a baron's patent; calling him to the House of Lords as Baron Chandos of Sudeley Castle, the residence of Queen Catharine Parr.

But his work was not yet done. To strike at Elizabeth, as Renard meant to strike, was one of those acts of policy which could only be dared on the strongest grounds. But the accusation of a dying man, a partner in the crime, who has ceased to be swayed by hope of life and fear of death, is *very* strong ground. Chandos had persuaded Wyat to make a charge in private; he had now to persuade him to repeat that charge in public; and in presence of the man whom his words would involve in guilt. The second part of his work was not so easy as the first. Wyat had hinted secrets in order to save his life; but he now began to fear that he had made this sacrifice in vain. In truth, his death was necessary to Renard's method of proceeding; since the evidence wanted against Courtney and Elizabeth was that of a dying and impartial man. Yet Chandos thought he had gained his point; and on the morning fixed for Wyat's execution, he arranged in the Garden tower a most striking scene.

On his way to Tower Hill for execution, Wyat was halted at the door of the Garden tower, in which Courtney lay, and conducted by Lord Chandos into the upper room, which he found full of great people: lords of her Majesty's council; Sir John Lyon, Lord Mayor, with David Woodruffe and William Chester, Sheriffs; gentlemen of the guard, officers and wardens of the Tower; all eager for the few words which he had been taught to pronounce, and on which the lives of Courtney and Elizabeth might be said to hang. To the chagrin of Lord Chandos, to the joy of Sir John Lyon and the Sheriffs, Wyat declared that he had nothing more to say. When he was placed before Courtney, in the midst of frowning councillors and kneeling sheriffs, he proudly called for the death procession to move on, as he had nothing to allege against either Courtney or Elizabeth.

Later in the day, two reports were made by spectators of what had taken place in the Garden tower. Chandos told the House of Lords that Wyat had implored Lord Courtney to tell the truth; and he told his story to the peers in such a way as to suggest, that if Courtney had confessed the truth he would have confessed his guilt. The Sheriffs of London told the citizens that Wyat had begged Lord Courtney's pardon for having in his first and false confession brought the names of Courtney and Elizabeth together in connection with his plot.

The death procession then moved on. A few minutes later, when the axe was gleaming near his eyes, the rebel told a crowd of people who had come to see him die, that he had never accused either the Princess or the Marquis of a guilty knowledge of his plot; that he could not truly make that charge, since they had known nothing of his affairs until the rising in Kent had taken place. "You said not so before the council," cried a priest who stood beside him. "That which I then said, I said; that which I now say is true," replied the rebel. In a moment more his head was in the dust.

No proceeding could be based on such a confession against the Queen's sister and heiress; but Renard could not think of letting Courtney escape his toils. Courtney was the White Rose; the White Rose was an English flower; and the Pomegranate was the only rose for which Renard cared. Though Courtney could not be put on trial, he was carried to Fotheringay Castle, where he was kept in durance until the marriage of Philip and Mary had taken place, when he was put on board ship, and sent abroad. He wandered about Europe, in what was understood as honourable exile, for a couple of years, and then died suddenly at Padua (not without hints of poison), in his twenty-ninth year. He was buried in the splendid church of Sant Antonio, and his ashes were covered with a sumptuous tomb.

Elizabeth is said to have looked with a favouring eye on Courtney; but his early death, before she came to her own, put an end to all chance of his ever being called upon to wear a king consort's crown.

Dying a bachelor, Courtney's titles of earl and marquis appeared to be gone for ever; but in an old country like England family titles have a charmed life. Ten generations after the pale young Earl of Devon and Marquis of Exeter died at Padua, a discovery was made which led to a revival of the earldom of Devon in the same old line. The patent granted to Edward Courtney on his release from the Tower by Queen Mary, was worded in a peculiar way; perhaps by an error of the copying clerk; for the Earldom of Devon was given to him and to his "male heirs" for ever; the usual words "of his body" being omitted from the grant. On the ground of his being one of Edward Courtney's "male heirs," Viscount Courtney, a few years before the accession of Queen Victoria, laid a claim before the House of Peers for the earldom of Devon, and as he made out his descent from Hugh, the second earl, a remote ancestor of the youth who lived in the Tower and died at Padua, that House decided that he might take his seat as Earl.

On Edward Courtney's death, the honours and perils of the White Rose fell upon Edmund and Arthur De la Pole, the luckless descendants of George, Duke of Clarence; and Beauchamp tower, the prison in which they pined away, shows many a sad memorial from their hands.

In the summer of 1562, when Queen Elizabeth was in the prime of her youth and beauty, an astrologer named Prestal, pretending that he had cast her horoscope, affirmed that she would die in the following spring, when her crown would devolve by right on Mary, ex-Queen of France, and reigning Queen of Scots. When Edmund and Arthur Pole (nephews of Cardinal Pole) heard of this prophecy, they thought it would beseem them, as members of the royal family, to prepare for the coming-in of Mary by raising a body of troops and throwing them into Wales. Mary was young, and a widow; and some one whispered to these poor boys that she might marry Edmund, who would then become king, and make his brother Arthur Duke of Clarence. Burghley seized them at the Dolphin Tavern, on Bankside, near the Bear Garden, as they were going to take boat for Flanders. Carried before the Council, they protested that they had never sought their sovereign's life, that they had never dreamt of laying hands upon her crown, that their aim, however wrong, had been confined to bringing in the true heir when her throne was vacant. But their name was against them; a jury found them guilty of high treason; and a judge condemned them to die a traitor's death.

Edmund was barely twenty, Arthur about thirty, when they were captured at Bankside. Their youth, and perhaps their folly, pleaded for them with the Queen, who had never yet signed a warrant for any political offender's death. She left the two brothers the consolation of each other's society in the Beauchamp tower; Edmund sleeping in the upper, and Arthur in the lower room. Each has left tracings on the wall; the sadder, as I think, those of the younger and more innocent boy.

In the first year of his imprisonment the young Plantagenet wrote in the stone:

DIO SEMIN
IN LACHRIMIS IN
EXULTATIONE METER.
Æ. 21. E. POOLE
1562.

Six years later there is a second inscription, now illegible, from his hands. Half-way down the winding stair, in a narrow slit through the masonry, he must have sat very often, with the gay life of the river spread out before him, the ships coming up and going down, the horsemen with their swords and plumes, the children playing on the bank, the country folks staring at the lions, and a little farther off the processions on the bridge. From his seat on the stairs he could see the fatal spot near St. Mary's Church, where, tempted by the lying astrologer, he was taking boat for Flanders when seized by Burghley's men. Unhappy youth!

Yet he was less unhappy in the Tower than he might have been elsewhere. He might have been married to Mary; he might have perished, as his cousin Darnley perished, in some Kirk of Field. Even in the Beauchamp tower he was luckier than many other princes of his race. His great-grandsire, the Duke of Clarence, had been drowned in the Bowyer tower; his grandmother, Margaret of Salisbury, had been hacked to pieces on Tower green; his father had been executed on Tower Hill. Compared with most of his race—who inherited the curse of his royal blood—his fate was mild; since he fell into trouble in that golden time of Elizabeth's reign, when the land was free from any stain of blood. As in the upper room, so on the staircase, he has left two records of his long imprisonment. In the slit through which he could see the ships, the river and the bridge, the church of St. Mary's and the Garden at Bankside, he has twice inscribed his name.

Arthur also left inscriptions on the wall; inscriptions rich in wisdom and resignation. To wit:

I H S
A PASSAGE PERILLUS
MAKETH A PORTE
PLEASANT
A D 1568
ARTHUR POOLE
Æ SUE 37
A P.

The two princes pined and died in the Tower, when their ashes were laid in St. Peter's Church.

CHAPTER XXII.

PRINCESS MARGARET.

ONE prisoner in the Tower has the rare distinction of being an actual ancestress of Queen Victoria. Outside the strong room of the Belfry is a small chamber, on the wall of which appear these words:

UPON THE TWENTIETH DAY OF JUNE
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND
FIVE HUNDRED THREESCORE AND FIVE
WAS THE RIGHT HONORABLE COUNTESS OF
LENNOX GRACE COMMITTED
PRISONER TO THIS LODGING FOR THE MARRIAGE
OF HER SON MY LORD HENRY DARNLE AND THE QUEEN OF SCOTLAND

HERE IS THE NAMES THAT DO WAIT
VPON HER NOBLE GRACE IN THIS PLACE
M. ELIZABETH HOSEY
M. JHAN BAILY
M. ELIZABETH CHAMBRLEN
M. ROBARTE PORTYNGTON
EDWARDE GREYNE
ANNO DOMINI 1566

On a second stone we read—

AS GOD PRESERVED CHRIST HIS SON
IN TROUBLE AND IN THRALL
SO WHEN WE CALL UPON THE LORD
HE WILL PRESERVE US ALL.

The Right Honourable the Countess of Lennox's Grace was the Princess Margaret, daughter of Queen Margaret, and Queen Elizabeth's first cousin of the royal blood.

Margaret's career as a princess living at the English court, may be divided into two parts: the first part records her love affairs until her marriage with her kinsman, Matthew, Earl of Lennox; the second part records the intrigues which led her son, Lord Darnley, to the consort-crown of Scotland, and ended with his murder at the Kirk of Field.

When Margaret came to London, at the age of fourteen, she lived with her aunt Mary Tudor, Queen of France, who, like her own mother, the Queen of Scots, had married again for love. Thence she went to Beaulieu, the house of her cousin Mary, until the birth of Elizabeth, when the King, her uncle, gave her a regular place at court, as first lady of honour to his infant child. She was then eighteen. Like all the ladies of her kin, she was apt to fall in love. While she was yet a girl, some passages between her and Murray had alarmed her friends; and when she met in the house of Anne Boleyn the young and handsome Lord Thomas Howard, she set the court in a flutter by her open preference for this kinsman of the Queen. Howard was encouraged by Anne to press his suit, and Margaret, in her lightsome mood, was very soon tempted into plighting her troth to the man she loved.

That act of devotion cost Lord Thomas Howard his liberty and life. The young lady stood too near the throne for any man to dream of asking her hand, unless with the King's consent to woo and wed. Henry was much perplexed about his crown. His daughter Mary had been tainted in her birth. In no long time his second daughter was to fall under the same dark stain. He had no son; and, in the absence of heirs, his crown would go to the children of his elder sister, the Queen of Scots. These children were James the Fifth and this Princess Margaret. James was barred by the Alien Act; so that Margaret was in fact the King's lawful heir. Had Henry died before his son was born Margaret would have been called to the throne.

The settlement in life of such a lady was a state affair of hardly less moment than the marriage of Henry himself. When, therefore, the King heard of a contract having been made by Lord Thomas with the young princess, he gave instant order to have the offender quickly seized and safely lodged. Short work was made with him. A bill of attainder passed; and Howard, condemned to die for his love, was left to linger out his life in the Tower, where he slowly pined to death—dying, if his noble kinsman, the poet Surrey, may be credited, for the love of his betrothed.

The Princess Margaret was sent to the convent at Sion, on the Thames, where she was placed under the special care of the lady abbess, with instructions that she should be allowed to walk in the garden by the river side, though in other things she was still to be considered as the King's prisoner rather than his niece.

To this affair of Howard and Princess Margaret we owe the first royal Marriage Act; which made it treason for any man to marry, unless with the King's consent, given under the great seal, any daughter, sister, aunt, or niece of the reigning prince.

By and by the Princess found a fresh adorer in Charles, a son of Lord William Howard; but this affair was less grave, since the lovers exchanged kisses only, and no troth was plighted on the lady's side. Yet Henry thought it well to send Cranmer to his niece with a view to dissuade her from playing, as it were, with fire. Then rose the question as to how a Tudor girl could be hindered from falling into love? Only one way was known; and by good advice this way was followed by the King. At the age of thirty she was given in wedlock to her kinsman Matthew, fourth Earl of Lennox—a man who not only loved her well, but, as a partisan of England, seemed likely to prevent her feet from straying into dangerous ways. So ended, in a happy marriage, the first stage of Princess Margaret's life.

To the Earl of Lennox she bore two sons, Henry and Charles, princes of the blood royal, who were recognised and educated at the English court. King Henry bestowed on his niece that abbey of Jervaulx in which Adam Sedburgh had reared his horses and made his cheese.

Unhappily, Margaret and Elizabeth were not good friends, and when Elizabeth came to the throne the Princess fell out of favour. Many things divided them, —some personal, others political. Margaret is said to have done a wrong to the Princess when a girl, which the Queen could not forget,—put some slur upon her title; a slur which, coming from a woman whose father and mother were described in a papal brief as having never been married at all, the proud girl could not stomach. Margaret was a pretender also; a pretender backed by a large and turbulent party. She was a Catholic, like her niece the Queen of Scots. Her husband was a Catholic; and her sons, Henry and Charles, had been secretly brought up in their mother's faith. Thus the Catholic gentry reaped the large benefit of having a race of English princes on their side. Lord Darnley, the elder boy, was from his cradle the hope and boast of an army of fanatics, strong enough to cause the Queen much trouble, since it was reckoned by very shrewd heads to comprise two out of every three country squires rich enough to hold commissions in the peace.

While these princes were yet boys, they were left in peace; but as they grew in years their mother Margaret began to dream of a crown for her elder son. Lennox adopted her ideas. Their hope was to match Lord Darnley with his cousin the Queen of Scots; a project which they knew that the Queen of England would never brook; but which they trusted by craft and daring to bring about, even though it should drive her wild with rage.

Now, the marriage of Mary, Queen of Scots, was one of those topics which no English councillor could ever allow to escape his pillow. Mary stood next in succession to the crown which had been won on Bosworth Field; next in blood, if not in actual law; and the purpose which had been kept in view by the best of Elizabeth's advisers, from the moment when she ceased to think of being succeeded by children of her own, was a union of the English and Scottish crowns on a single head; an object only to be accomplished by uniting them in a descendant of Henry the Seventh, of the Scottish line. Thus Mary's son would be the very next English King. Mary's choice of a second mate was consequently an affair of English policy, in which the English Queen and council fancied they had a right to make their voices heard. Elizabeth wished her cousin to marry a man of English views; if possible, of English blood. Darnley was now known to be a Papist—in her eyes a fatal bar.

On hearing a first hint of this design of putting Darnley on the throne as king-consort, to become the father of an English line, Elizabeth threw Lennox into the Tower, and placed her cousin in a country-house at Sheen. The affair struck Burghley as one of the gravest in which his mistress had ever been engaged. A match between Darnley and Mary would unite the Catholic party in England to the Catholic party in Scotland; a union fatal to the public peace, if not dangerous to Elizabeth's throne. In presence of such a peril, the English council had to march with no timid step.

Lennox, lodged in the Tower, was closely watched; denied, as he alleged, both air and exercise; worse than all, he was not allowed to dine and sup at the Lieutenant's board. Thomas Bishop was employed to rake up charges against him; and this scoundrel made out a list both long and black. Lennox, if not his wife, could see at no great distance a vision of the axe and block; and they felt the policy of working by another line. The Earl submitted; on which Sir Edward Warner, the Lieutenant, invited him to dine and sup with the other prisoners of his rank. The Countess threw herself on the Queen's compassion; and Elizabeth, who liked to do her kinsfolk good, when she could serve them without peril, let the penitent Earl rejoin his wife at Sheen.

Margaret and Lennox had only yielded to gain time. They had given their word, but they had never thought of holding to the pledge. In fact, they meant to play their game, and win the English crown by either fair means or by foul. If the Queen of England were against them, the Queen of Scots was on their side. Elizabeth was proposing Lord Robert Dudley, the handsomest man in Europe, to her cousin; offering as the bait of this English match the instant proclamation of Mary as her heir. The Queen of Scots, unable to see her duty with English eyes, refused the match. Darnley was a Catholic like herself; a descendant of Henry the Seventh like herself; and though he had none of the personal advantages of Lord Robert, she resolved to take him for her mate.

Burghley, deceived by Margaret's penitential airs, imagined that Lennox, who seemed to have given up every thought of the match for his son, might be employed as an English agent in the Scottish court. Lennox wished to go north on his own account; but he wished to go north as the representative of English credit and English might. Now, Burghley desired to have a man of high rank, in whom he could trust, near the Queen of Scots, until she should have Lord Leicester as a husband by her side. Lennox proffered his service, professing a strong desire to see Leicester married to the Scottish queen. If Lennox had been true to his word, no safer agent for his purpose lay within Burghley's reach. The English had yet to learn that he was not true to his word.

Supplied with pistoles to spend, and trinkets to give away, Lennox went north, leaving Margaret and her two boys in London. He was armed with letters of acceptance from Burghley, from Leicester, and from the Queen. He bore a confidential note from the Queen of England to the Queen of Scots. His reception at Holyrood was kind. The Queen received him in her chamber; the three Maries smiled upon him; David Rizzio gave him welcome. He sent the news of his reception by his wife's niece and her court to Leicester and to Elizabeth. His own affairs, too, were prospering; but some difficult point of Scottish law required that his son, Lord Darnley, should be present when certain deeds were being signed. He begged her Majesty's license for his son to make a short trip into the north, in order that no legal doubts might afterwards arise. Burghley, still believing in the Earl, allowed the young gentleman to start. Lennox became still more intimate with the Queen of Scots. Mary went with her ladies to sup in his room, where she danced, and played dice, and lost a jewel to the Earl. Backed by the whole English party in Mary's court, as well as by Mary herself, Lennox made rapid way in his suit; and his son had scarcely appeared in the palace of Holyrood, ere he announced to his private friends in Scotland that there was such love between the royal cousins as would end in a match.

On this report reaching London, orders were sent by Burghley for the prompt return of Lennox and Darnley into England. Then came the blow which all along Lennox had meant to deal at the English Queen. He refused to obey, cast off his allegiance, and defied her Majesty's power. He and his son were beyond her reach.

This revolt in her own family not only vexed but alarmed the Queen, who saw her wise care for her kingdom crossed by the humour of a vain woman and the folly of a petulant boy. She arrested Margaret; and her younger son, Charles, a child of nine, was placed in the charge of Lady Knyvet, while his mother was being escorted to the Tower.

Elizabeth hoped that the plot was checked. Knowing Lord Darnley and the Queen of Scots, she felt that this boy of nineteen was no husband for this widow of twenty-three. Boding evil of every kind from such a match, she set her face against it, even though she could not punish either the reckless boy or the wilful queen. Lennox pressed his suit. Darnley made a friend of Rizzio; and Mary, in face of the remonstrances of her brother Murray, the best man in her court, gave her hand to the youth who, of all her suitors, was the most objectionable in English eyes.

When news of their private marriage, which took place in Rizzio's chamber, reached London, the Queen could not believe it. Then came the public rite; the revolt of Murray; and the thousand troubles which followed in their train. More than once the thought of sending an army across the Border came into Elizabeth's mind, but the Queen controlled her temper, and left the Scottish drama to end in its own dark way.

Margaret's confinement in the Tower, though close, was far from being harsh. The best rooms in the Lieutenant's house were given up to her use and that of her attendants, and were furnished anew with arras, tables, stools, and plate. A fire-pan was put into her room; which was supplied with ewers and drinking cups becoming her estate. Two ladies, a maid, one gentleman, and a yeoman, were received in her train, and lodged at the public cost in the Lieutenant's house.

In this state, the daughter of Queen Margaret lay in the Tower. News came to her from her son. She heard of the private marriage in Rizzio's room; of that scene in the kirk where Knox inveighed against the rule of women and boys; of the flight of Murray; of the quarrels of Darnley and Mary; of the murder of Rizzio; of the ominous reconciliation of Murray and the Queen; and of the perilous situation of that son for whom she was enduring her sharp restraint. Few rays of comfort ever reached her cell. Lennox neglected, Darnley forgot her. Of course, she found her situation bad. Her rooms were small, her means were scant. When her cries reached the throne, Elizabeth sent her Lord Treasurer, the Marquis of Winchester, to look into her case and make things straight, if the royal lady would show him the way to do it. Margaret would not help the Marquis. In truth, her case was not one to be met by a few honied words and a few trifling cares. Her misery was that she had married a faithless husband, that she had borne a foolish son, that she was made the pledge of an unpopular cause.

Darnley, now king consort beyond the Tweed, offered himself as a chief to every man living south of that river who disliked the Queen; and more than once, in his madness, he proposed to cross the Border into England, raise a new Pilgrimage of Grace, and drive her from the realm by force.

Thus, the two royal cousins watched the course of events beyond the Tweed, in which they felt an equal passion; one from her apartments in Whitehall, the other from her chamber in the Tower.

One event occurred which might have made them friends; the birth of a prince. That child would be the next English king. In him, therefore, the two women had a common interest; the first as her official heir, the second as her natural heir. Elizabeth melted towards the lady in the Tower, whose son and husband were rejoicing in their Scottish capital over this auspicious birth; but the folly of Lennox and Darnley would not suffer her to express her feelings in acts of grace. The daughter of King Henry and the daughter of Queen Margaret were still to sit apart; watching events beyond the Tweed; and peering through the distance into that cloud of tragic gloom.

Then came the blow which was to end their strife. Darnley was murdered at the Kirk of Field; the victim of his beautiful and perfidious wife. On this news reaching London, the Queen sent down to her Lieutenant, and set her captive free. All the evil which she had feared was come to pass; and though she could never love her cousin, she would not add the misery of confinement to the agonies of a breaking heart.

After Queen Mary had been driven out of her kingdom, and Murray had been shot, Lennox was appointed Regent. Like Murray, he fell by an assassin's hand. Margaret, who stayed in London, sank into poverty and obscurity; only broken by fresh troubles in the marriage of her second son, Charles, to Elizabeth Cavendish. She died at last so poor, that her funeral had to be conducted at the Queen's expense; when she was borne in a state procession to the great Abbey, where she lies among the kings and princes of her race.

When the Princess died, her elder son's only child, James Stuart, was a young man; her younger son's only child, Arabella Stuart, was a little girl. The boy, a dull fellow, was to wear the English crown; the girl, a fair, bright creature, was to be one of that dull boy's captives in the Tower.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PLOT AND COUNTERPLOT.

SIXTEEN months after Darnley's murder in the Kirk of Field, Queen Mary, his wife and cousin, was a fugitive from justice on English soil. She had married his murderer and lost her crown.

At this moment of her career, the situation of Mary Stuart seemed lonely enough to subdue the wildest spirit. She had lost, not only her crown, but her reputation and her child. The half-brother who had been her companion in youth, was in arms against her. The thanes who had stood around her throne, had flung her into jail. The parliament of her kingdom had set on her brow the brand of murderess. What was she to live for more? At twenty-six she had exhausted every passion of the soul. She had reigned as Queen since she was six days old. She had been adored by poets, warriors, and musicians. She had married three husbands; and these three husbands she had lost by death, by murder, and by captivity. She had enjoyed every luxury of earth, and she had suffered every bolt from heaven. At an age when good women are beginning to taste the flavour of life, she was already separated from her partner in crime, and seeking on a foreign soil a refuge from her country, her brother, and her son.

Such a fugitive might have been expected to live in quiet, to shun the public eye, and to devote her days and nights to making her peace with God. But this was not the view which Mary Stuart and her friends —most of all her clerical friends—were disposed to take of her duty towards the land into which she had come. Granted she was a great sinner; yet sinners have their rights in the law as well as saints. She was a queen, and queens are not to be punished for offences like the rank and file. David, said her divines, was an adulterer and a murderer; yet his people had not risen against him, and taken away his crown. The commons have no authority to judge their kings. If kings go wrong, the Lord will chastise them with rods of steel. They must be left to God; but they must be left to God in hope and charity, not in wrath and spite. Even from the Scottish pulpits, in the midst of people to whom the details of her life were known, these doctrines were put forth. "St. David was an adulterer, and so was she," cried Alexander Gordon, Archbishop of Athens and Bishop of Galloway; "St. David committed murder, and so did she. But what is this to the matter?" In Gordon's view it was hardly anything at all.

From the hour of her stepping on English soil, Mary Stuart began to plot against Elizabeth's peace, and in all her plots she had the personal sanction and service of John Leslie, the able and learned Bishop of Ross, who became her agent, her confessor, and her spy. This bishop was a divine of the Italian and Spanish type; supple, tolerant, unscrupulous; a man of courts and of affairs; easy with fair sinners, facile with the great; never afraid of lying and deceit; and bent on serving his Church, even though he should have to do so at the peril of his soul. The plots and counterplots of this crafty woman and her yet more crafty priest, have no examples, except in the Spanish and Italian comedy of intrigue.

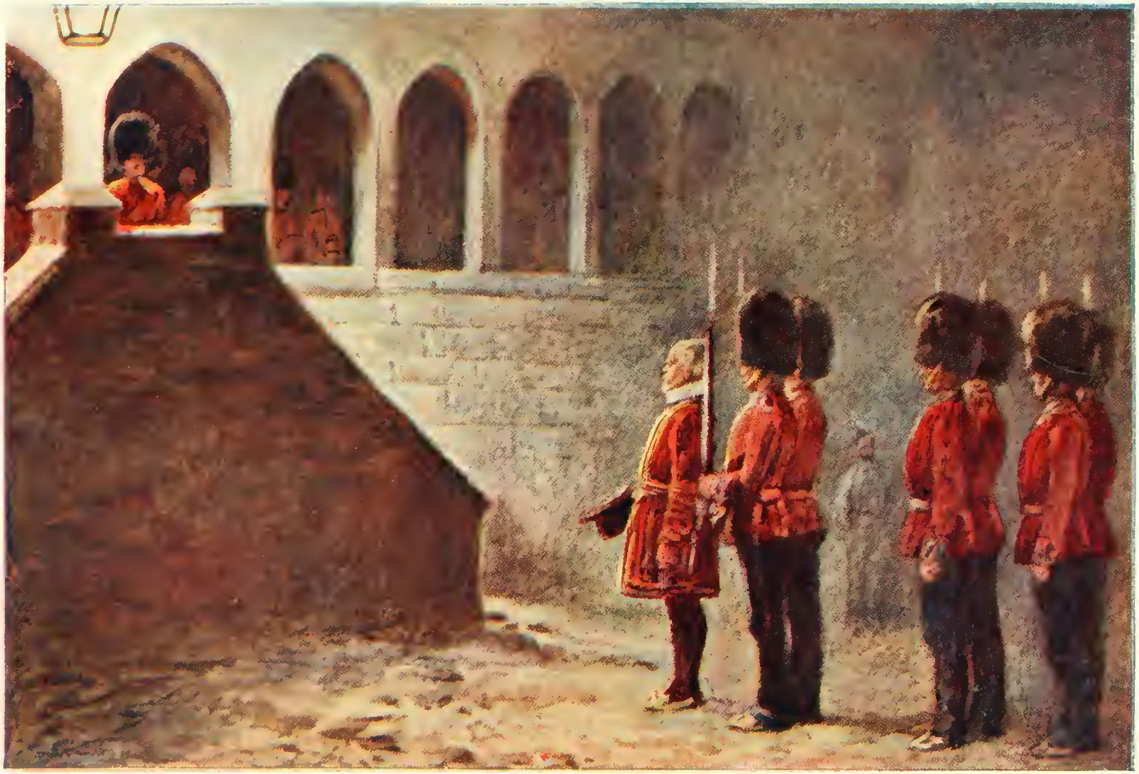
To any other woman than Mary Stuart, to any other bishop than John Leslie, the events which had driven the Queen of Scots from Holyrood, and of which her English cousin, in giving her shelter from her foes, was bound to take due notice, would have seemed sufficient to cancel her claim on the English crown. She had no rights in London which she had not in Edinburgh; and the highest court in Scotland had deprived her by solemn acts of all those rights. Found guilty of murder, her very life stood forfeit to the law. In England, too, she was a stranger, excluded from succession by the Alien Act.

But all these facts and laws were nothing to the Queen of Scots, and to her spiritual adviser the Bishop of Ross. She had the example of her cousin, Mary Tudor, before her eyes. Mary Tudor had found no favour in the law; yet law and power united—the letters-patent, the fleet, the army, and the council—had not been able to sustain the nine-days' Queen against the higher force which lay in her rights of blood. Ross pretended that a right of nature is not to be lost by personal offences; and he cited his favourite case of David on the house-top in Zion, and Uriah in the fore-front of the war at Rabbah. Neither Mary Stuart nor her priest could quite forget the points which, in comparison with Mary Tudor, told most fatally against her claims. Unlike her English cousin, the Queen of Scots was an alien, a murderess, and a fugitive. She had no great friends abroad, and not a single friend at home. But she had weapons, and they knew it, such as Mary Tudor could never boast; bright eyes, a velvet touch, and a wheedling tongue. The Bishop himself, though he had professionally renounced the devil and all his works, could not escape the charm of Mary's smile. No woman in the world had so much power of making fools of men. Besides her dazzling beauty, she had a wide experience in the ways of love, and knew the arts by which men's senses are enslaved. No poet, warrior, troubadour, had yet been able to resist her wiles; the best and worst had fallen equally at her feet; for when her grace and radiance failed of their proud effect, she could throw into the charm by which she drew men to her the lustre of her royal birth and her expected crown.

With such advantages of face and birth, how could Mary Stuart want for friends? Among the English lords who were coming to York with power to judge between her and the Scots, was no man open to the flash of peerless eyes? If Mary could find a lover on the bench of judges, she might rebuke her brother, the Regent Murray, and weaken the position of her cousin the English Queen.

From the lords sent down to York on the Scottish business, she selected as her prey, with the assent of her Catholic counsellor, that stern reformer, Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, the richest noble and strictest Protestant in her cousin's court. It is not likely that she would have gone so far as to marry him; for he was crabbed in temper, weak in purpose, ugly in figure; even if the sour but honest Duke could have been persuaded to take her as a wife, while her husband, Bothwell, was yet alive. But short of actual marriage, a clever woman might do much; and Mary's misfortune was that her brain was only too prompt to suggest the way of doing any bad thing on which she set her heart.

Norfolk was not the only conquest which she deigned to make. Thomas Percy—son of Sir Thomas the Pilgrim—a man who, on the fall of Dudley, had been restored by Philip and Mary to the ancient honours of his house, as seventh Earl of Northumberland, and Warden of the East and Middle Marches—was in cross humour with the Queen. He thought himself ill used. Elizabeth had taken from him the great power of Warden of the Marches, and given this power to William, Lord Grey of Wilton, a man whom Percy regarded as inferior to himself in birth and rank.



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THE CEREMONY OF LOCKING UP THE TOWER.

Percy's confessor found fault with the policy pursued by Burghley; and Percy had begun to think that the old religion and the old families would never fare well in England until the dynasty was changed. The Queen of Scots had an easy conquest in the Earl.

But Percy was one of her minor cards; to be played or not, as fortune should suggest; her game was to be made on Norfolk, whom she had drawn to her side in body and soul. "Have a care, my lord, on what pillow you lay your head," said Elizabeth slyly to the Duke. Poor Duke, the only pillow to which Mary Stuart could lead him was the block!

For a time, the coming over of Norfolk and his party to the Queen of Scots gave a lively turn to her affairs; leading to many wild hopes in the north, and to much correspondence with the courts of Brussels and Madrid. For the conveyance of this dangerous correspondence, Leslie—who had been received by Elizabeth as an ambassador from the Queen of Scots—had to find out trusty agents; men who were willing to risk their lives for either a purse of money or a bishop's thanks. Where a fanatic could be found, he was naturally preferred.

Among the shrewdest of the many agents employed by the Bishop of Ross, in going and coming between London and Brussels, was a young Fleming, known as Monsieur Charles, who seems to have been a messenger and spy to Signor Ridolfi, the secret minister of Pius the Fifth. Clever with pen and pencil, speaking four or five languages like a native, a good Catholic, poor, and of no family, attached to Mary Stuart as to a royal saint, professing boundless reverence for his Church, the young Fleming, Charles Bailly, was just the man for conspirators like Ridolfi and the Bishop of Ross. He knew the country and the Continent. In Scotland a Scot, in Italy an Italian, in Flanders a Fleming, in France a Gaul, he could go anywhere, and pass for anything. One day he might be a merchant, a second day an artist, a third day a courtier. Cobham, then Lord Warden of the Five Ports, was keen of scent, yet Monsieur Charles crossed and recrossed from Dover without exciting his jealous quest. Not until he and his packet of letters fell under Burghley's scrutiny was the young Fleming caught in the trap, and made to give up the secrets which he knew.

Norfolk was led to fancy that he could wed the Queen of Scots, and carry her back to Edinburgh with the help of Spanish gold and English steel. Leslie thought so too. Not that the Duke and Bishop regarded Mary as a royal saint, whom it was a sacred duty to assist in recovering her lost throne. They knew her too well. Howard, while he was offering her his hand, believed in his heart that she had been privy to Darnley's death; and Leslie, who knew her as only a priest could know her, believed that she had not only taken off her second husband, but her first. But the fact of Mary being a bad woman was of no account to men with purposes like theirs. She was a Queen. In her veins ran the blood of Stuart, Tudor, and Plantagenet. Her children, thought Howard, will wear two crowns; her advent in London, thought Leslie, will serve the universal Church. The two men thought of Mary as a tool which they could use for purposes of their own. Norfolk persuaded himself that he was not a boy, to be put aside like Darnley; and the Bishop of Ross repeated to himself that even when David had taken Uriah's wife he had not been wholly cast out from the fold of God. The Duke thought himself a wary man; young in years, but ripe in knowledge; with an experience of married life equal at least to that of Mary, since he had buried three duchesses of Norfolk before he was thirty-one years old. The Bishop must have laughed under his cope at the Duke's pretence of being able to control the Queen of Scots.

Elizabeth sent for Norfolk. In the gallery at Whitehall she rated him for trying after a match with her cousin, a pretender to her crown, without coming to her for leave. The Duke made light of the affair; he cared nothing, he said, for the Queen of Scots; he had nothing to gain by the alliance; his own estates in England being worth little less than the whole kingdom of Scotland. Words so haughty must have struck the Queen. The foolish fellow added that when he stood in his own tennis-court in Norwich he felt himself a prince.

What wonder that the Queen was cold to him after that memorable day? Norfolk felt that he was losing favour; and to make things worse for him he withdrew from court without taking leave; retiring to Kenning Hall, his great castle on the Waveney, which was linked in every one's memory with the advent of that other Catholic Queen. But Elizabeth was not Jane. Norfolk was soon arrested and in the Tower; though not in peril of his life; until Ross and Mary began to stir up friends in the north, sons of the old Pilgrims of Grace, to make a diversion in his favour by a sudden appeal to arms.

Percy, Earl of Northumberland, rose at once. Joined by Charles Nevill, Earl of Westmorland, he donned the Pilgrim's badge, a cross, with the five wounds of Christ; entered Durham at the head of his armed followers; declared the Catholic Church restored to her ancient rights; attended high mass in the Cathedral; and then marched forward to Clifford Moor, on which he encamped with six thousand horse and four thousand foot. The rebel Earls proposed to advance on York, and raising the country as they went along, push onward for the Don. If they could reach Tutbury, on the Dove, where the Queen of Scots then dwelt, and carry her back to Scotland on their shields, Percy might hope for some sweet reward, and both the Earls could defy Elizabeth's power. But while Percy and Nevill were dreaming, Sussex, Clinton, and Warwick were rushing on their lines with overwhelming power. The rebels retreated across the Border; whence Nevill escaped to Flanders, where the Countess of Northumberland joined him; while Percy himself, unable to get on board a vessel in the Firth, was seized by Murray, and flung into Lochleven castle, the strong and lonely pile from which Queen Mary had escaped.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MONSIEUR CHARLES.

THE game seemed passing out of Leslie's hands; but the Bishop of Ross knew far too much of what was passing out of sight to feel discouraged. His friend Ridolfi, the Papal agent, had drawn up a list of Catholics in the English court on whom the Pope could rely; and this list, of which Leslie had a copy, included many of the most ancient barons of the realm. What was going on in Rome was to bring a change. A Papal bull was to be launched; Elizabeth was to be cast down; all Catholics—half the people of our realm—were to be urged, on peril of their souls, to rise up against her. The Queen dethroned, who was to take her place? That was Leslie's care.

Under the name of "A defence of the honour of Mary, Queen of Scotland," Leslie wrote a book which he sent Monsieur Charles abroad to get printed for him at the Liège press; a dangerous book to own, since it dealt, in a very bold spirit, with the whole question of Mary's claims to the English crown. In his own mind Leslie had formed a perfect plan; the first part of which was to get Norfolk freed from the Tower, so as to have all his forces in the front. In this feat he succeeded, at the cost of some lying and much pledging on Norfolk's part. Norfolk being free, Leslie sent Monsieur Charles to Liège for copies of his book, so as to be ready to act when the Papal bull arrived. Events, he hoped, would take the following course. The world would read his argument on the title, and be convinced. When men were ready for the truth, the Papal bull would arrive. He would then announce that the Queen was deposed, that the Church had cut her off, that the Catholic powers had declared war against her, that the whole country was up in arms. On this the Catholic lords would seize the Tower; Norfolk would march on Tutbury; in a few weeks Mary would be crowned in Westminster, the Spanish party would come into power, and the Universal Church would be restored.

The plot was a very fine plot on paper; but Leslie's instruments failed him, and, in truth, he failed himself. A raid of some English troops into the Western Highlands piqued him into a premature publication of the Papal brief. The barons were not ready; and as the London citizens read the bull and passed on laughing, the great conspiracy ended like a farce, except to Leslie and his agents.

Monsieur Charles was leaving Brussels for London with copies of the Bishop's book, and letters from Lady Northumberland, Lord Westmoreland, and other exiles, when the Italian minister, Ridolfi, gave him a packet of three letters addressed to the Bishop of Ross. Landing at Dover, Monsieur Charles was overhauled by the Lord Warden's men; and the books and letters being found in his bag, he was carried up to London for examination by Lord Cobham himself. The books were in English, and the offence of bringing them into England was no trifle; but the three letters, as Monsieur Charles knew only too well, were far more serious than the books. On his way to Cobham's house in Blackfriars, he contrived to send news of his arrest to the Bishop of Ross.

Monsieur Charles and his bag were examined by William Brooke, Lord Cobham, and his brother Thomas, once the false friend of Wyat. The letters were in cypher, and two of them were addressed to 30 and 40. The young Fleming said he knew nothing about them; he was only a messenger; he could not read the cypher; nor had he any clue to the numbers. But on closer search of Monsieur Charles's clothes, a key to this cypher was found sewed up in his coat; by means of which key Lord Cobham and his brother were soon aware what perilous stuff Monsieur Charles had brought to Dover in his bag. Cobham felt that he must carry the books and papers to Burghley; but his brother Thomas, who was deep in Catholic plots, catching a sign from Monsieur Charles, opposed this course; urging that the moment these books and papers came into Burghley's hands, their friend, the Duke of Norfolk, would be a dead man. Cobham could not see it, nor could Monsieur Charles explain to him how the Duke was touched. But in fact, as Bailly knew very well, number 30 meant the Duke of Norfolk, number 40 meant Lord Lumley; and the letters addressed to them by the Pope's agent contained treason enough to bring twenty heads to the block, even under a Queen who had never yet shed one drop of traitor's blood.

Cobham got into his boat and pulled for Burghley's house; but on the way he softened towards his brother's prayer; the more so, as he thought despondingly of much that had passed between Ridolfi and himself. For Cobham was one of the barons in Ridolfi's secret list. Yet, what could he do? The bag had been seized at Dover; Monsieur Charles had been openly brought to town; the searchers had seen his books and letters; and not many hours would elapse before Burghley would have reports from his spies. Concealment was vain. Could anything be done under the plea of accident, to save the Bishop and the Duke? Perplexed in mind, he left the books at Burghley's house, and took back the letters to his own; where he sealed them up afresh and sent them over to the Bishop of Ross, with a request that the prelate would come down next day to Blackfriars and open the packet in the Lord Warden's presence.

Leslie understood his hint. Breaking the seal, and taking out the dangerous missives, the Bishop slipped away to the Spanish embassy, where he told Don Gerau his bad news, and begged assistance in his trouble. The ambassador saw that the packet must be taken next day to Cobham's house. They knew it would be sent on to Burghley; and that if Burghley saw those papers, the Bishop would be ruined, the Duke would be executed, and the Queen of Scots overthrown. Could they keep back the papers? Could they foist a false packet of news on Burghley, yet prevent him from guessing that he was tricked? Bishop and ambassador thought they could. Burghley would know that letters had been seized; he would want to read those letters; he would expect to find treason in them. All might be arranged if Leslie and Gerau were left alone. Locked in a private closet, the Scottish prelate and the Spanish minister spent the long night in forging papers; concocting a series of cyphered letters, tinged, indeed, with treason to throw Burghley off his guard, but away from the matters which were truly under hand. Some of these papers they wrote in the cypher found in Monsieur Charles's coat. They threw in the Papal bull; and the packet was then carefully sealed. Before daylight came, their work was done.

The true letters from Ridolfi were now sent on to Norfolk and Lumley; the forged letters and the brief were taken to Cobham's house in the bag; and when they were safely delivered, the Bishop ventured with consummate craft, to write a letter to Burghley, complaining that his servant, Bailly, had been arrested, and that some letters, which he was bringing over from Brussels, were detained. Leslie, who took the high tone of an ambassador, begged his lordship to give orders that his servant might be released, and his letters restored. The Bishop felt no scruple in adding, that he could not say what these letters contained; but could and would say that not one word in them would be used by him except as Burghley should see fit.

For a moment Burghley was deceived by these artful lies; but he was cautious enough to send Monsieur Charles to the Marshalsea, where he would be watched by very sharp eyes. In the Marshalsea, Monsieur Charles found one of the suffering saints: William Herllie, a kinsman of Lady Northumberland; a man who had fallen with the family fortunes and was now the occupant of a wretched cell. Herllie, who was known to the Bishop of Ross and to the Spanish ambassador, was regarded by his fellow-Catholics as a victim to Burghley's Protestant zeal, since he was often put into irons, locked in a close room, and fed on bread and water. Every one pitied him—every one trusted him. Women who saw him pass by pale and shivering, said he could not live; and men, who had a firmer hold on life, were anxious to obtain the consolation of his blessing and the profit of his advice. Yet this suffering saint was in Burghley's pay; and six nights after Bailly's arrival at the Marshalsea, Burghley held in his hands some clue to the Bishop's plot.

Leslie had tried to open a direct communication with Monsieur Charles in prison; but Burghley had taken care that he should fail; and, on the failure of his first attempts, he tried what could be done through the suffering saint. Through William Herllie his letters were passed on to Monsieur Charles, and answers from Monsieur Charles were duly received by the Bishop of Ross. But the adroit and unscrupulous prelate was not aware that his letters, and the answers to them, passed through Burghley's hands, and were copied by Burghley's clerks. Being in cypher, these letters told Burghley no more than that the Bishop was in clandestine correspondence with the prisoner. More was wanting to justify Leslie's arrest; and the suffering saint was employed to get a copy of Bailly's cypher. But here the impostor failed; and Monsieur Charles discovered, through a luckless blunder on the part of Herllie, that the suffering saint, and cousin of Lady Northumberland, was a common cheat and spy.

Other and sharper courses were now adopted. Burghley sent for Monsieur Charles, laid the copies of his letters to the Bishop, with the Bishop's replies, before him, and bade him instantly read them out. Bailly pretended that he could not read them—he had lost the cypher, and could not recall the signs. Burghley told him he was lying, and that the rack should make him tell the truth. Monsieur Charles was sent to the Tower, and Sir Owen Hopton lodged him in the good Lord Cobham's room, on the walls of which he scratched at once this warning:

I. H. S.
1571
Die 10 Aprilis.

Wise men ought
circumspectly to se what
they do, to examen
before they speake, to prove
before they take in hand,
to beware whose companey
they use, and abouve al
things to whom they
truste.
Charles Bailly.

Yet his own hard lessons had been poorly learnt.

During the months of April and May he was often questioned by Sir Owen; sometimes, though not severely, on the rack; and as he felt no wish to be a martyr, he complained to the Bishop of Ross; who, in mortal fear lest he should tell what he knew about Ridolfi's letters and the books printed at Liège, sent him such comfort as he could find; beds to lie on, food for his table, good advice for his soul. Most of all, Leslie begged Monsieur Charles to get strength in his travail by thinking of what holy men had often suffered for the truth.

Burghley got at the poor Fleming's secret, without having to break his bones.

There happened to be lying in the Tower in those days, a man whom all his fellow-Catholics regarded as a genuine saint. This man was John Story, Doctor of the Canon Law; a man who had been bred to conspiracy, who had renounced his country, who had been naturalised in Spain. Story had been kidnapped in Flanders, brought to London, lodged in the Lollards' tower, tried for his offence, and sentenced to death. Elizabeth's desire to keep her reign free from political executions, had heretofore saved him from the gallows.

This man had formerly been a tenant of Beauchamp tower, on the wall of which he had carved his name:

1570
JOHN STORE
DOCTOR

But he seems to have been removed before Bailly came in, as the success of Burghley's humane and humorous contrivance for making Monsieur Charles confess, turned upon his not being acquainted with Story even by sight.

Since the open war began between Rome and London with the Papal brief, it was understood that the law would be allowed to take its course; and as Story lay under sentence, he was reverenced by his fellow-Catholics as a man who was about to die. What Story said was gospel; and Monsieur Charles, like every other Catholic prisoner, was anxious for his good advice. Great, therefore, was his joy when he opened his eyes one night on a tall, thin figure which stood beside his pallet, and answered to the name of Story. In the face of his own warning on the wall, Monsieur Charles took the stranger's word; opened his ears to the words of an impostor, and consented to act a part, the outline of which the impostor sketched for him. "Pretend," said the false Story, "to enter Burghley's service and to play the spy on Leslie; that is the way to be of use to Mary and the Church. Burghley has got the bishop's cypher; but you may make a merit of giving it up. You will tell him nothing, and gain his confidence, by reading the letters." A sudden light seemed to flash on Monsieur Charles. So good a man as Story must know best. On the morrow he was to be racked again. Here, then, a door was opened by which he could escape Sir Owen and the torture, and yet do service to the Bishop and the Church. In the morning he rose to confess whatever he knew, and was greatly surprised to find that when he had told his tale, he had betrayed his master and done himself no good.

Monsieur Charles's revelations showed how vast a conspiracy had been organised by Leslie and the Spanish party against Elizabeth's crown. The danger in which the Queen was placed by the Bishop's plot and the Papal brief, was used as an argument for removing her scruples against taking life. Pressed on all sides by foes, the Queen at last gave way; and the iron age of her reign set in. Story was hanged. The Bishop of Ross was seized. The Duke of Norfolk was lodged in the Tower once more.

In the fall of that year Monsieur Charles inscribed a new set of morals on the wall of Beauchamp tower:

I H S

PRINCIPIVM SAPIENTE TIMOR DOMINI.

BE ENNEMYE TO NONE.

XPS
Anno D. 1571 10 Sept.

The most unhapy
man in the world is he
that is not pacient in ad-
versities. For men are not
killed with the adversities
they have: but with y^e^ impa
cience which they suffer.

Tout vient assoient quy peult attendre
Gli sospiri ne son testimonie veri dell' angos-
cia mia

Charles Bailly

æt. 29.

BE FREND TO ONE.

HOEPENDE. HERT PACIENTE.

CHAPTER XXV.

BISHOP OF ROSS.

AT first, John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, was visited in his own house by Lord Sussex, and put under question as to the correspondence with Monsieur Charles, the mission of Ridolfi, and the letters addressed to 30 and 40. He told a new set of lies, and Burghley knew that they were lies. Bailly's confessions had told him much, and Mary's answers to questions, the object of which she could not guess, completed what the Fleming had left unsaid.

Yet even now, with proofs of Leslie's treason in her hands, the Queen would not consent to lodge him in the Tower. He was an ambassador, the minister of a sovereign prince. Up to this moment Elizabeth had refused to recognise the state of things in Scotland, and to receive at her court an ambassador from King James. She had treated Mary as the actual Queen of Scots, and although that royalty was a mere shadow, Elizabeth would not agree to depress her cousin's party in the north so much as would be done by the arrest of her agent in the English court.

But the plot was coming out shred by shred. Norfolk's servants confessed to much, and Norfolk himself, when locked in the Tower, told all the rest. Lord Cobham, too, alarmed by what he saw going on, came forward to confess having kept back the letters brought over by Monsieur Charles. The secret numbers were discovered to mean Norfolk and Lumley. When these facts were known, the case was again submitted by Burghley to the Queen. Who could answer for the public safety while the chief director of these plotters remained at large? Elizabeth saw the need for action, yet even now she would have gladly seized on any excuse for leaving the Bishop of Ross alone. She said the crown lawyers should be consulted on a case. Burghley obeyed her hint, and in a short time reported that the crown lawyers were of opinion—in the first place, that a prince who had been lawfully deposed like Mary Stuart, had no sovereign rights at all; in the second place, that an ambassador who had been concerned in a conspiracy like John Leslie, forfeited his rights of representation. On reading these reports, Elizabeth gave way so far as to allow of the Bishop being lodged in the Tower, in the rooms which had been occupied by Cranmer, but she would in no wise consent that he should be either put to the rack or threatened with the rack.

By a lucky chance, these merciful limitations of Burghley's powers were not hinted to the Bishop, who might have held out longer had he known that his bones were safe. But in his chamber in the Bloody tower, he heard from day to day of men being racked until they told the truth, and when Burghley rejected his first confessions as idle talk, and gave him forty-eight hours to consider what he would say, his strength of will broke down. When the judges sent for him on the third day, Leslie answered the questions put to him with the frankness of a man who has done his best and worst, and looks back on his course with consuming scorn. Never was a foul heart emptied of more perilous stuff. He explained the secret history of Norfolk's doings in York; the part which he had taken in Northumberland's rising; the plot for seizing the Queen, for raising an insurrection in East Anglia, and for bringing the Walloons into Essex. He confessed for Mary Stuart as well as for himself. He spoke of her privity to Darnley's murder, and he accused her of meaning to kill Bothwell also. Finally, as a Catholic prelate, he wrote an admonitory letter to his royal mistress, warning her not to meddle with plots in the time to come, but to trust in God and in her good sister the English Queen.

Mary was profoundly moved on reading Leslie's words. "The hand is Esau's hand," she murmured, "but the voice is Jacob's." After the rising of Percy and Nevill, Mary had been removed from Tutbury to Chatsworth, Coventry, Wingfield, and Sheffield, in the last of which places she was lying when made aware of her most serious loss. On finding that she had not only lost her ambassador, but found in him a critic and perhaps a foe, she burst into sullen rage. "He is a flayed and fearful priest," she cried, "he has done what they would have him do." All this was true enough, but the royal lady's wrath could not help her to a servant equally adroit. Norfolk was the first to suffer from these confessions. Leslie told enough to slay him, but William Herllie, the suffering saint of the Marshalsea, found out a good deal more. The Duke's servants and secretaries, thrown into the same ward with Herllie, were soon in the saint's confidence, and every night reports of what they told him were sent over the water to Burghley's house. No man in English story had more evidence of guilt to fight against than Norfolk. Would Elizabeth put him to death? To the last moment she said nay.

No Queen had ever such good reason to hold her own in the way of mercy; for since the day of her sister's death not a drop of blood had been shed on Tower Hill.

The fact is one without example. For two hundred years the axe on Tower Hill had never been at rest; it is doubtful whether in all the reigns from Richard of Bordeaux to Mary Tudor, a single year had escaped the stain of political murder. The reddest reign of all was that of Mary; a reign which lasted five years only, yet filled the land with mourning, and smeared the page of history with blood. It is Elizabeth's glory that she put an end to this feast of death; that for twelve years of her golden prime she never signed a political sentence; that, until Mary Stuart came into England, and the Papal bull was issued, she banished from English life the old dark image of the headsman and his block.

What wonder that the poets called her country Merrie England!

While the Queen was debating what to do, the Scottish prelate was making the best of his situation in the Bloody tower. As he was called a Bishop, Sir Owen Hopton, the Lieutenant, had begun by treating him as an English baron, supplying him with food, fire, and lights at the rate of 53s. 4d. a week for diet, and 6s. 8d. a week for fuel. He had his own servant, Cuthbert Reid, a Scot, to wait upon him. But some of his indulgences were in time withdrawn. Reid, his servant, left him. Hopton informed him that he must provide his own food and fuel; for the allowance made to prisoners was made from estates which had been seized to the prince's use; but Leslie had no estates to seize. In the winter he fell sick of cramp and ague, a common disease in the Bloody tower, and he wrote to ask Fénélon, the French Ambassador, for five hundred crowns to pay his weekly bills. As some solace in his misery, Leslie employed his knife in carving a record of his captivity in the Bloody tower. A long Latin inscription, which is unhappily worn by damp and years, concludes with this name and date:

JO. EPS. ROSSEN. SCOTVS
1572

In the spring of this year a prospect of deliverance opened upon Leslie, which was perhaps more terrible to him than the chambers of the Bloody tower. Since the day when Percy crossed the Border into Scotland, Burghley had never ceased to press the ruling Regents, Murray, Lennox, and Mar, for his surrender as a rebel to his Queen. Of course the Regents had declined to meet him; yet Percy had been kept a prisoner in Lochleven Castle, under the charge of Sir William Douglas, a Highland chief. More than once, the Scottish court suggested the policy of an exchange; of giving up the Earl of Northumberland, and taking in his place the Bishop of Ross; but to such an act of barter the pride of Elizabeth could not stoop. Nor was the Court of Scotland eager to give up the Earl; since a rebel of so much consequence on the Border was a capital hostage to hold for the English Queen. But Leslie never could be sure that Burghley and Mar would not come to terms; and he knew that once he were given up to Mar, his shrift was likely to be short. At the end of May, he heard, to his great delight, that Percy was in English hands, having been sold by Sir William Douglas to Lord Hunsdon, Governor of Berwick, for two thousand pounds.

This sale being made, the Bishop felt safe enough, for no English rebel of rank was now in captivity beyond the Tweed; and from his chambers in the Bloody tower he could watch with comparative comfort the dance of death.

Norfolk was the first to die; and the fact that he was the first political offender since her Majesty's reign began, occurred to him on the scaffold; adding, as it would seem, a pang to the bitterness of his remorse. He died denouncing the Pope's religion, and humbly begging his pardon of the Queen. "I am the first in her Majesty's reign to suffer; may I be the last!" he cried. The assembly sobbed, "Amen."

A few days later, Northumberland was put to the axe in York. Lord Hunsdon tried to save him; thinking him a better man than his heir, Sir Henry, second son of Sir Thomas the Pilgrim. The title, entailed on this Sir Henry, could not be withdrawn for his brother's offence; yet Hunsdon, who knew the northmen well, sent Burghley word that the new Earl would be far more dangerous than the old. But Burghley saw no way of pardoning such a man as Percy; the leader of a great revolt and a great apostasy; and towards the end of August, Leslie heard in the Bloody tower, that the second of his illustrious victims had laid his head upon the block.

For Northumberland, it is not likely that Leslie cared; but Norfolk was his confidential friend; and he must have felt that his plots had brought the unhappy Duke to his untimely end. Perhaps he consoled himself with the reflection that Norfolk might have done worse than die without knowing what Mary Stuart was. Any way, he made to Thomas Wilson, doctor of divinity, a confession which that clergyman reports to Burghley in these words:

"He said further, upon speech I had with him, that the Queen his mistress is not fit for any husband; for first, he saith, she poisoned her husband, the French king, as he hath credibly understood; again, she consented to the murder of her late husband, the Lord Darnley; thirdly, she matched with the murderer, and brought him to the field to be murdered; and last of all, she pretended marriage with the Duke, with whom, as he thinks, she would not long have kept faith, and the Duke would not have had the best days with her."

The English clergyman who reports the Bishop's words, can only add, in comment: "What a Queen! and what an ambassador!"

As nothing more could now be got from Leslie, he was suffered to depart from the Bloody tower, on the understanding that he was to live abroad, and trouble her Majesty no more.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MURDER OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

THE Bishop of Ross left his chamber in the Bloody tower to the third of his illustrious victims; to that Henry Percy who succeeded the Lochleven fugitive, as the eighth Earl of Northumberland.

Like all the great Border chiefs of the Tudor age, Percy had been much employed against the Scots; though he was known to be one of those sticklers for the old creed who bowed with only a sullen and disdainful mind to the new order of things in Church and State. As a soldier he seems to have done his duty; fighting his friends the French as fiercely as he fought his enemies the Scots; and standing by his mistress, even when his brother, the seventh earl, had joined with Lord Westmoreland against their queen.

But the Jesuits in whom he trusted led him astray; and the man who had fought so gallantly at Leith against the Scots, became, under their guidance, one of Mary Stuart's staunchest friends. To what reward for his services he looked we can only guess. Norfolk aspired to her hand; why should not Northumberland? To the last Mary was a siren; a being with the beaming eye, the wooing voice, which take the senses captive. But whether hope or piety led him on, Percy began to waver in his faith; and the English council, who had spies in his closet, and knew what he was saying and doing, even in his private moments, commanded him, as an act of safety, to keep his house.

This order, meant as a warning to him, was not strictly kept, since he was allowed to live at Blackfriars, his princely house on the Thames, and to ride down when he listed to Petworth, his fine estate on the Sussex downs. Yet chafed by a show of restraint, he listened more eagerly than ever to the tempter's voice. The Jesuits who had gained his ear, soon made of him their tool. In what he thought the seclusion of his own gallery at Petworth, he held midnight interviews with Charles Paget, one of the most subtle and dangerous of the men employed by those who conducted the permanent conspiracy against their queen. Paget came over from Dieppe, landing on a lonely part of the Sussex coast; where he met William Shelley, of Michelgrove, one of the Earl's Catholic friends; and was housed by Percy in one of the lodges of Petworth Park. Here Thomas Lord Paget joined them; and in their cups the three Catholic gentlemen talked a good deal of nonsense about the Pope, the Duc de Guise, and the Queen of Scots. Percy meant no harm. Had the Guises come over, he was likely enough to be the first afield against them; but, like all the old Percies, he was a man of jealous temper and imperious habit; one who could ill endure to see such upstarts, as he called Hatton and Burghley, basking in royal favour, while barons of lofty lineage like himself were left in the shade.

Much of his foolish prate with Paget and Shelley was woven by cunning hands into a net, which closed upon him when the time was ripe. To what extent, if any, he was guilty of actual treason we shall never learn; his death cut short all process against him; and the plausible story which was told by Hatton after his murder must be taken with a good many grains of salt.

One of the plotters, Francis Throckmorton, had, by his own confession, done his worst to persuade the Duc de Guise to throw an army into Kent. The arrest of that conspirator warned the braggarts of their danger; and Northumberland persuaded Lord Paget to fly the realm. Lord Paget being the most eminent man who knew of his parley with the agents of disturbance, Percy supposed that his secret would be safe so soon as Paget was beyond the sea. But he found, to his dismay, how little his cunning could contend against Burghley's craft. Paget got away; but the meshes were drawn about the humbler associates of his crime; and when Percy, to his great astonishment, found himself lodged, under care of Sir Owen Hopton, in the Bloody tower, he heard that his friend Shelley was not only lodged in a neighbouring vault, but had already been made to confess his offences on the rack. Percy sent a message to Shelley, begging him to be firm; to which the poor gentleman replied that it was easy for a great baron, protected by his nobility from torture, to advise him to be firm; but he, a country squire, had been twice on the rack, and he could not bear it. In fact, on being questioned once more, in the presence of Lord Chief Justice Anderson, as to the coming and going of Jesuits, as to the lodging of agents in Petworth Park, as to conversations held in the Earl's book-room, Shelley told what he knew, and perhaps more than he knew. Men stretched on the rack became pliant to the judge; answering in their pain as the questioner wished; crying yea and nay, just as the cords were strained and the joints were torn. By Shelley's account, Charles Paget brought news to Petworth that the Pope had sanctioned a crusade against the Queen, that the Duc de Guise would conduct the landing of foreign troops, and that the Church expected the Catholic barons to be ready. Shelley was made to confess that the Earl was a party to these schemes. Paget, in a letter to the Queen of Scots, denied the second part of Shelley's story. It was probably not true. Burghley made no efforts to bring Percy before the courts. A year passed by; yet Percy remained under Hopton's charge; a prisoner, awaiting his trial by the peers. That trial he was not to have.

On a summer Sunday noon (June 21, 1585) Hopton, the Lieutenant, received two orders from court; the first, to arrest the Earl's three servants—men who had always waited on him—and to lodge them in close custody for the night; the second, to place in the Bloody tower, as sole attendant on the Earl, one Thomas Bailiff, a gentleman, who brought the orders for that service. By two o'clock the new arrangements had been made. Palmer, Price, and Pantin, Percy's old servants, were caged; and Bailiff (who was one of Hatton's confidential men) was housed in a room adjoining that in which the Earl ate and slept.

When supper time came, Bailiff was at his post. At nine the Earl retired in his usual health. About twelve o'clock an old fellow, who lay in an outer room, heard Bailiff shouting, and called the watch. On the watch coming up, Bailiff sent him to rouse the Lieutenant and beg him to come at once to the Earl of Northumberland's door. Hopton was soon there; and passing into the chamber found the Earl in bed, undressed, with his clothes in perfect order, and the bed-quilt decently drawn about his limbs. He was dead.

On turning down the sheets Hopton saw that the bed was full of blood; that the body had a wound under the left breast, which seemed to have been made by a knife. He left the room for a few minutes, locking Bailiff inside, while he wrote an account of the Earl's death, which he described as having been caused by the plunge of a *knife*. When he returned to the chamber, Bailiff drew his eye to a pistol lying on the floor, about three feet from the bed, which he had not seen before.

Sir Christopher Hatton, who managed the whole affair, set up a theory that Percy, overwhelmed by those proofs of his guilt which had been drawn from Shelley on the rack, had destroyed himself, in order to escape a trial, a traitor's doom, and the forfeiture of his family honours and estates. A theory of self-murder would not square with death by a knife, since three or four warders, who rushed into the room on the first alarm of foul play being raised, had seen the bed in which Percy lay a corpse. No man could stab himself to death, and then draw the sheets about his limbs, as they had been found in Percy's bed. But might he not take a pistol into his bed, fire it under the clothes, and die without a struggle? Such was Hatton's explanation of an event which filled the taverns of Cheapside and the aisles of St. Paul's with wonder and alarm. An inquest on the body, held by the Tower coroner, a mere court official, failed to appease the public mind. Thousands of tongues accused the council of foul play, and to put an end to these bruits in the City, the Government was compelled to act and to explain. Hatton's line was taken in the affair by Burghley. The first letter, in which Sir Owen spoke of the *knife*, was kept back. A Star Chamber Council was convened, at which the Lord Chancellor Bromley made a long statement of the Earl's offences, of his imprisonment, and of his suicide. Finally, a pamphlet was put forth, in order, as was said, to calm men's minds and to silence malicious tongues, in which Percy's servants were made to give evidence tending to suggest that the Earl had meant to kill himself, while the tale told by Bailiff and Hopton was given in such a way as to show that he had carried out his plan. Pantin, it was said, confessed that the pistol belonged to his lord; that it was bought from Adrian Mulan, a gunsmith, living in East Smithfield; that Price, his fellow-servant, carried it into the Tower; that the Earl concealed it in the chimney of his room; but fearing it would be found in that place and taken away, he had slipt it into the mattress of his bed.

Bailiff was made to say that when the Earl supped and sent him away that night, he came to the door and bolted it inside, saying, he could not sleep unless his door was made fast. After that, said Bailiff, all was quiet until the hour of midnight, when he heard a great noise, as of a falling door, and springing out of bed, cried, "What is that, my lord?" Finding the Earl made no answer, he went on calling and crying until the old fellow in the next room answered him, when they called the watch, sent for Sir Owen, broke into the room by force, and found the Earl dead in his bed.

In spite of all these assertions, folk would not believe that Percy died by his own hand. Hatton bore the odium of contriving a midnight murder; for many years the event was spoken of as a political assassination; and that by men who, like Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Robert Cecil, knew every mystery of the court.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PHILIP THE CONFESSOR.

OVER the fireplace in the common room of Beauchamp tower, once tenanted by the Good Lord Cobham, by "King" Guilford, by the last White Rose, and by Monsieur Charles the moralist and spy, the eye is taken by some faint and flowing lines, looking all the weaker from contrast with so many tablets of the stern and monumental kind. These are the words in Italian letters :—

> *Quanto plus afflictionis pro Christo in hoc*
> *Sæculo, tanto plus gloriæ cum Christo in*
> *futuro.* *Arundell June* 22
> 1587.

The author of this tablet was Philip Howard, called by his Jesuit biographer Philip the Confessor.

This Philip Howard, a son of Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and Mary, sole heiress of Henry Fitz-Alan, twelfth Earl of Arundel, was born to wear the coronets of two great houses, and to enjoy the wealth of three great families. A King and Queen stood sponsors for him, and he was heir to honours which Kings and Queens can neither give nor take away. His father was a son of Henry the Poet, who first gave musical pause and flow to our Saxon tongue. His son was the famous Marble Earl. So that Philip the Confessor, who owed his name to a Spanish king, and his title to a Jesuit Father, stands side by side in story with men whose names will be gratefully recalled so long as the memory of song and art endures.

Philip the Confessor has a dim kind of fame; first as a prisoner in the Tower; next as a martyr for his faith. The Church of Rome has done much for Philip; it vexes one to find how little he did for the Church of Rome. What was done for her glory in Philip's house was accomplished, not by Philip, but by his wife.

Few wrong notions thrive so rankly in our books as the popular delusion that these Howards of Norfolk, Arundel, and Surrey, have been strictly loyal, through good and evil times, to the universal Church. No house in England has been so wayward in its faith.

When the new lights began to burn in Church and State, no men received them with a warmer welcome than the Howards. Thomas, third Duke of Norfolk, stood in front of the affray with Rome. He was the uncle of Ann Boleyn. A great noble and a good soldier, he pushed forward the divorce, he denounced the Pope, he crushed the Pilgrimage of Grace. The Poet, his son, was a Protestant, and more; what in these times would be called a free-thinker. The Poet's son, Duke Thomas, had the name of a reformer, and even of a persecutor; a name which the Jesuits who lived upon his son declare that he had only too well deserved. Philip, the fourth in descent since the new lights came in, was the first man of his house who went over from the English side to the side of Rome. He fell to the Jesuits, a power then new in England. These Jesuits styled him a Confessor, while his kinsmen and countrymen called him, with equal justice, an Apostate.

Since Philip's day the Howards have changed sides from father to son with a regularity to suggest the working of some natural law; the mysterious force—it may be—which compels the vane on a high tower to flow in the path of a prevailing wind. Philip converted his youngest brother, Lord William, the Ruffler, who is known as Belted Will; but his second brother, Lord Thomas, afterwards Earl of Suffolk, lived and died in the National Church. The Poet's second son, Lord Henry, afterwards Earl of Northampton, boxed the compass; being a Protestant in his youth, a trimmer in his middle life, a Catholic in his old age. So it has been throughout. Some of these Howards have lapsed, some have relapsed; from Philip's father, who turned Gregory Martin out of doors, down, through that Protestant Jockey of Norfolk, who was a friend of Fox, to Duke Henry, who in our own day gave up the church of his father for that of his Queen.

Like the men of his house, Philip was inclined to bear no cross unless it were his own. In early life, he was so little of a saint and confessor, that his family dare not print the charges written against his name by one of his dependent priests. We are told by this priest, that Philip left his young wife, that he fell into debt, that he wandered after strange faces, that he . . . . then comes a suspicious blank. Philip would seem to have fallen under doubt of doing much worse things than following after damsels who were light of love. The Jesuit hints at the young Earl's vices, without telling us of what sort they were. We only know that Philip repented of them in his latter and better days. When he was a prisoner in Beauchamp tower, he wrote to Father Southwell, the poet, that on going back into the world, as he then hoped, he would sell the rings and jewels which had been given to him in his wicked youth by the companions of his dissolute hours, and send the money for which he sold these tokens of evil, to the poor. "And so far was he ever after from such faults," says the good priest, "that he could, and upon just occasion did, protest in another letter to the same Jesuit, that after he became a member of the Holy Catholic Church, he never once was guilty therein."

Yet Philip was not so much a wicked man as a weak man. Anne Dacre, the wife to whom he had been married for money when he was less than twelve years old, was a Border lassie; sister and heir of George, the last Lord Dacre of the North; a woman sour in face and sly in manner, but kind to the poor, and very obedient to her priest. Like all her neighbours in the north, she was a Catholic; though she was crafty enough to hide her preference from her father-in-law the Protestant Duke. She was older than the Earl, her husband. When the Protestant Duke was put to death for his part in the Bishop of Ross's plot, she dropped the mask which she had worn so long, and filled her house with Jesuits. Then Philip, her husband, ran away.

A dull wife, with Father Southwell and a train of Jesuits in her chamber, was not to the mind of a boy who had all the gaieties of London within his reach. Anne loved the country, Philip loved the town. Anne preferred Arundel Park and Castle, with the downs and sea; Philip preferred Arundel House and gardens with the river and the Strand. Given up to her devotions, Anne would rise with the lark to sing her matins; given up to his pleasures, Philip would lie in bed till noon, to sleep off the fumes of wine. Anne felt herself a better woman when her house was filled with priests. Philip ran away from his wife on account of these fellows, and he hated these fellows on account of his wife.

At one time, things looked likely to go wrong, indeed, between man and wife; for Philip not only left Anne without his society, but talked of denouncing their marriage, as null and void. When he first stood at the altar with Anne he was under twelve. They were married again on Philip attaining his fourteenth year; but Philip was told by some of his gay London comrades, that the second rite had no binding force. Disliking the sour woman, and hating her priests and Jesuits, he forbade her to lodge in his London house, even when he was out of town. But Anne clung to Philip, like his fate. She appealed to his higher nature and his better sense. She got his aged grandsire, the Earl of Arundel, and his rich aunt, the Lady Lumley, to interfere. These kinsfolk tried to reconcile the pair ; so far at least as to persuade Philip to live with his wife under a common roof. Once they seemed to have brought him back to a sense of duty. He took his wife home, and in this interval of happy love, his son Thomas, afterwards famous as the Marble Earl, was born. But Philip could not stand the Jesuits, and rather than live a dull and decent life with them, he quarrelled with Lord Arundel and Lady Lumley ; who were so deeply hurt by his cross humour, that they left away from him many a broad acre which he had thought his own.

For many years, there was a battle, as it were, between the Church and the world, for this weak man's soul.

Philip, now become Earl of Arundel, in his mother's right, resolved to shine in courts ; but on trial, he found how hard it was to fill men's eyes and engage their tongues in a circle adorned by courtiers like Leicester, Blount, and Raleigh. He tried to outbrave these gallants in the splendour of his tilts and tourneys. When the Queen went down to Kenning Hall, his seat in Norfolk, he invited, not only the court, but the shire, to meet her. From Kenning Hall, he carried this party of guests to Norwich ; where the most reckless spendthrifts in the county stood amazed by the spectacle of his riot. Who could tell where he would stop ? Who could say what dreams were in his brain ? Courtiers could see that he aspired to a favourite's place. The Queen, an unmarried woman, was of his kin. Women of his line had matched with kings, and men of his family had courted queens. His father had been accepted by the Queen of Scots. Who could tell what fortune had in store ?

Yet all his striving and expenditure were thrown away; for Philip had neither the wit, the genius, nor the personal beauty necessary in a contest for favour with the men who sparkled in Elizabeth's court. In his costly banquets there was little art; in his splendid joustings there was still less taste. The Queen smiled at him, but not on him. When the last pistole in his purse was gone, he began to feel how wearisome were the pleasures which he had bought; how childish the distinctions which he had won. Then, in his hour of debt and self-reproach, his wife came forward with her money and her love. She paid his debts; she touched his heart; and she healed his wounds. From that moment the ruined spendthrift was her own.

Once housed beneath her roof, with Father Southwell and Father Weston at his side, this son of a stern Protestant sire was soon reconciled to Rome.

The Queen's Council, moved by hints of his lapse from the National Church, called up the Earl and Countess of Arundel; both of whom denied that any such change had taken place. As a caution, they were parted from each other; Philip being ordered to keep his house, while Anne was lodged with Sir Thomas and Lady Shirley at Wiston, near Steyning. But in a few months, on the noise of their apostasy dying down, they were restored to each other's arms. If they had kept within the law, and avoided public scandal, they would henceforward have been left in peace; but such a course of life would not have suited the weak Earl's spiritual guides.

Philip was much in the hands of Father Grately, a priest whom Cardinal Allen had sent over to advise him how to act his difficult part. Grately was one of those poor fools who fancy that men are ruled by secret signs and private tokens. He confided to the Earl as a great mystery, that *black is white;* telling him that this secret token was to be a bond between them for ever, like the ring between a man and wife. This foolish Father Grately had a correspondent in Paris called Father Gifford, to whom he wrote a full account of what was going on. Father Gifford was a spy, who sold these secrets of the closet and the confessional for gold. By his means Secretary Walsingham was made aware of every word spoken in the privacy of the Earl's closet, while Philip supposed that his inmost thoughts were known to none save Grately and himself.

No wonder that Philip found few openings for his talents, and that Elizabeth's court was closed against him! At length the silly youth resolved to quit a country in which he found no field—to seek an asylum in the provinces of his godfather Philip the Second, and to offer himself as a leader to the discontented exiles and partisans of Rome.

If he did not carry out his scheme at once, it was because some of the Jesuits whom he met in his wife's apartments were honest men. These Fathers wanted him to serve their Church; and, in order to serve their Church, it was needful for him to live a decent life. Father Weston, who received his submission, told him he must live by Catholic rule as well as swear by Catholic dogma. Here was the cross. In those days Philip had no religious scruples to overcome; he had read nothing, and he knew nothing; but he was vain and frivolous, fond of dice and drink, a slave of tavern sluts. He could not give up all these things at once. But he rode down more frequently to Arundel Castle; he read the tracts of Cardinal Allen and Father Southwell; and he made such progress in spiritual knowledge that, on meeting his brother, William—Belted Will Howard—he talked that Ruffler over to the Pope!

The brothers agreed to start from England without the Queen's license—a grave offence in men of their rank; but they could reckon on receiving a very warm welcome from King Philip of Spain, who was busy with his grand Armada, and would be glad to find two

Plantagenet gentlemen, sons of the great Protestant duke, in his court and camp. Who could tell? Philip had claims to the Crown; the blood of Edward the First was in his veins; and the arms of Edward the Confessor were on his shield. Such a man might be turned to many uses by a prince so subtle and unscrupulous as Philip the Second, even before the time should come for launching his navies against the English Queen.

But the Jesuits felt that Philip could be more useful to the Church in London than in Brussels. His great name, his high rank, and his vast estates, conferred upon him a power of encouraging and protecting missionary priests, which would be thrown away the moment he landed on a foreign soil. They tried to dissuade him; but he would not now draw back. A weak man is always afraid of seeming weak. He knew his own mind. He had weighed the business well. He had hired a boat to carry him into France. The skipper knew of his design; and not to go when his friends expected him, would be to prove that he was still a child. The Countess, who was on the side of her priest, implored him at least to take her with him when he fled; since she could neither bear a second parting from her lord, nor face the terrible anger of her Queen. Philip would not listen; he would sail for Calais; and he would sail alone.

When he got a fair wind, and put out to sea at dusk, the skipper who had bargained to take him over for so many pistoles, hung out a light; on which they were suddenly assailed with shot by a ship of war, commanded by Captain Keloway, whom Philip supposed to be a pirate. Keloway, acting the part of pirate, boarded the boat, saw the Earl, and asked him whither he was going? Philip, who never suspected that his captor was acting under orders from Walsingham, replied that he was bound for Calais. Keloway, playing the part of pirate, told him he should go free for one hundred pounds; for which sum he must give his note of hand to some confidential friend on shore. Philip sat down and wrote a letter to his sister, Lady Margaret Sackville, begging her to ask Father Grately to pay the bearer of his note one hundred pounds by this token that was betwixt them—*that black is white.* The pretended pirate took the letter, read it closely, put it in his pocket; and then, turning sharply on the writer, told him that he was no pirate, but a public officer, who had been appointed to lie in wait for him at sea, to take him in the act of breaking the law, and to bring him back by force to land.

On the 25th of April 1585, the fugitive Earl was brought into the Tower. His brother, Belted Will, and his sister Lady Margaret, were put under arrest, and his wife's confessor, Father Weston, was flung into the Clink.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MASS IN THE TOWER.

THE Countess Anne, so far from being overthrown by this night adventure of her husband, felt her wit fired, and her strength increased, for that conflict with the world in which she was now to engage alone.

Her first thoughts were for Father Weston, whom she missed from her side even more than she missed her wayward lord. Putting on a poor habit, so that she could walk about the City unnoted, she went down to the Stews, a vile neighbourhood in Southwark; in which stood the Clink prison, the Bear Garden, the licensed dens from which the quarter took its name, and those inn-yards in which wandering friars were wont to show the Burning of Sir John Oldcastle and the Temptation of Eve. Playhouses like the Hope and the Globe had routed these old monkish dramas from the tavern yards; but many of the dens which in olden times had been licensed by the clergy still remained under the walls of Winchester house; though the signs which had once told the story of their origin too plainly, such as the Cardinal's Hat, the Three Kings, and the Cross Keys, had been removed by the reforming clergy as too scandalous for the public eye.

The Clink jail in this district was tenanted by drabs and thieves, by pirates and monks; by the vilest scum of the river, and the filthiest sweeping of the street.

Being a clerical prison, it was sometimes made a lodging for men of a better class; most of all for men arrested on suspicion of being Jesuits and priests. Hence, Father Weston, a prisoner of the Bishop of Winchester, was thrown into this loathsome den.

In her disguise, the Countess went among the stews, made friends of the Clink turnkeys, and tried to corrupt them by her gold. Her hope was to get the Father into France; and if bribes could have bought his freedom, he would certainly have got away. Thomas Cowper was then Bishop of Winchester, and Cowper's men proved loyal to their trust. They told the Countess, that Weston was not confined for money, and would never gain his liberty through money. They spoke the truth. Anne was surprised; her experience having taught her to believe in the power of gold to corrupt men's souls. When Father Blackwell, the arch-priest, was hiding in a house in Sussex, orders to search for him came down from London; and the Father was in peril, not so much of discovery, as of hunger and thirst; since the watch kept over all the family was close enough to prevent any one from going into his secret cell. Anne rode over to the house; asked to see the captain in a private room; and, by means of a great bribe, persuaded him to connive at the arch-priest's escape. Blackwell was brought to her own house and the captain received from her ladyship a venison pasty every Christmas day so long as he lived. At the Clink, she had to do with officers of the Church; and in spite of her disguises and allurements, Father Weston was confined in the Clink until the end of Elizabeth's reign.

Philip, brought before the Star Chamber, was charged with three offences; (1) with an attempt to leave England without the royal license; (2) with going over from the Church of his country to that of Rome; (3) with having proposed that a foreign prince should create him Duke of Norfolk. These charges he partly evaded, partly denied. The attempt to escape into France could not be gainsaid; but he asked the judges to believe that he had no purpose in view beyond getting away from his personal foes. The apostasy from his Church he denied in substance, if not in form; saying, it was true that he had confessed his sins to a priest, but that in other things he was not reconciled to Rome. The proposal, made to Cardinal Allen, that he should be raised to the rank of Duke, he denied in terms.

The court, believing the evidence against him on all three points, and on two out of the three there could be no room for doubt, condemned him to imprisonment during pleasure, and to a fine of ten thousand pounds.

The Countess was left at large, though she was occasionally brought before the judges and questioned as to her household. Backed by her Jesuits, she was a match in the cunning and knavery of police for Walsingham himself. As the Earl was not a felon, his estates were spared; and while Anne had plenty of money in her purse, she knew a hundred ways in which justice could be baffled and her enemies put to shame.

For more than a year the Earl's confinement in the middle room of Beauchamp tower was rather close. A gentleman was appointed as his keeper, and when he walked in the garden for exercise, either this keeper or the Lieutenant was bound to walk at his side. After awhile he was allowed to have servants of his own; but these fellows were of little use, since they sickened of the Tower, and wanted more indulgence than their lord. Roger, the Lieutenant's man, was the chief person in his room.

The steady old Catholics were not gained over by the Earl, and some of them expressed for him all the contempt which his weakness provoked. One Catholic priest said Arundel had no religion at all; another said he was weak enough to hear mass of a morning and sermon of an afternoon. Many of the priests declared that he pretended conversion to their Church out of policy. But for the Countess Anne they held another speech. She was a Dacre of the North; and those Dacres of the North had been always staunch and true.

Anne made many brave efforts to see her husband in the Tower. If the council would have let her, she would have taken up her quarters in his room, and made that room the base for fresh attacks upon her Queen. It could not be. The time was too restless, Anne too clever for such indulgence to be offered. But the Countess understood that it was the plotter, not the wife, who was denied admission to the Tower. Other ladies were let in, while she was sent away.

Then a wild thought came into her head—a woman's thought, full of daring and of peril, which pleased her fancy, and of which she did not pause to count the cost. If she could not carry to her lord the comforts of her own presence, she could provide him with the consolations of his own religion. Yea, if such thing could be contrived by woman's wit, and paid for by the Dacre purse, there should be mass in his room; yea, there should be mass under the Queen's nose, in the midst of her chains and bolts, her guns and pikes, her generals and councillors; yea, in that year of the Armada, when the Spanish infantry were jumping on shore in Kent and Essex, there should be mass for their success in Her Majesty's Tower!

Anne never paused to ask what influence such a fact might have upon her lord. She knew that he would do her will. She may have hoped to make his fortune and to save his soul. For she reckoned, as all her Jesuits reckoned, that the Spaniards who were arriving would win the fight; that London would fall as Antwerp had fallen; and that England would become the Flanders of her race.

In the Belfry, which communicates with Beauchamp tower, by the gallery known as the Prisoners' walk, lay in those days an old priest named William Bennet; a man who had changed his religion more than once; and who was now, in hope of the Spanish invasion, a very warm Catholic. Lady Arundel went to Mistress Hopton, daughter of Sir Owen the Lieutenant, and with a bribe of thirty pounds induced that young lady to leave open the gate in Prisoners' walk so as to allow of Father Bennet passing into the Earl's room unseen. The first point was gained—Philip had obtained the services of a priest. A rude altar was now raised, a chalice obtained, a garment for the priest sent in, with all the things required in celebrating mass. Philip invited Sir Thomas Gerard of Lancashire, and William Shelley of Sussex, Catholic prisoners then in the Tower, to his chamber, which was now in their eyes a chapel. To the old tablet over the fire-place, he added in the same flowing Italian letter:

Gloria et honore eum coronasti domine
in memoria æterna erit justus.

When the two Catholic gentlemen were come in, and the doors closed, Father Bennet began a mass for the success of Spain; Philip doing duty as an acolyte, and the other gentlemen kneeling and taking part.

Nor was this act the worst of which Philip was guilty in the Tower. While the Spanish ships were in the Channel, he instituted a prayer for their success, which was to continue day and night without ceasing, among all the Catholic prisoners in the Tower, and among all their friends outside, until the Spaniards had shot down London bridge. At this time Philip was high in spirits. He fancied he would soon be King, and he promised Father Bennet that his first act of royal grace should be to make him Dean of St. Paul's.

The year of the grand Armada passed away. Before it was yet gone, Hatton had been down to the Tower inquiring into the truth. That men of English race might differ in opinion as to the real presence in the bread and wine, was credible. That men of English race should offer up prayers for an enemy on our shores, was incredible. Yet the evidence which Hatton found of that monstrous deed was overwhelming. Father Bennet turned on the Jesuits. Sir Thomas Gerard betrayed his friend. William Shelley, after some suffering, told his secret. It was now a case of high treason, the worst kind of high treason; and the poor Catholic gentlemen who had sins of their own to bear, were only too prompt in throwing all blame upon the Earl. If the Spaniards had won their prize, the men who had said mass for them would have been heroes in the Spaniards' court. But the Spaniards had not won their prize; and these gentlemen could only save their lives by keen alacrity in accusing each other of their common crime.

Philip was tried in the ensuing spring for high treason. Bennet and Gerard were the chief witnesses against him, and the lords had no choice but to condemn him. Anne was not arrested. It is possible that her part in the business was unknown; we only know it from the revelations of her Jesuit biographer, in whose eyes her corruption of the Lieutenant's daughter by a purse of thirty pounds was a meritorious act. She was left at large; though she suffered, of course, from the loss of her husband's property.

The Queen could not make up her mind to take Philip's life. On the trial, Burghley gave him a last chance of acquittal, by asking whether he held that the Pope could depose the Queen? He would not answer. Would he defend the Queen against a foreign prince? Yes. Would he defend her, asked Hunsdon, against the Pope? To this question he would give no answer, yea or nay. Then the Earl of Derby, as Lord High Steward, pronounced on him the sentence of death.

The day after his sentence, he wrote two letters in the Beauchamp tower; one to the Lord Chancellor, the other to Father Southwell. In the first, he made humble suit to the Queen, that Her Majesty would graciously forgive him the many offences which he had committed against her and for which he expressed his hearty sorrow. In the second, he explained to the Jesuit Father, that his letter to the Queen was written in an equivocal sense. It was plain that his letter to the Lord Chancellor would be read as expressing a hearty sorrow for his crimes; but he wished Southwell to know that this was not the true meaning of what he wrote. He wanted his spiritual guide to understand that he was *not* sorry for his public offences against his country; but that he was sorry for any trifling annoyance which he might have caused Her Majesty during his many years of service in her court! This was the moral of his token, *that black is white.*

What could be done with a man so feeble and so subtle? Leave him alone, thought the Queen. Enough of the Howard blood had fallen; the blood of stronger and better men than Philip. Duke Thomas, his sire, had died beneath the axe. Earl Henry, his grandsire, had died beneath the axe. Philip's crimes were blacker and baser than their offences; but these men had been dangerous, and he was not dangerous. Thus, the Queen's decision was that he should not die.

Then began the better part of Philip's life, the only part, indeed, on which a man of any creed can now look back with pity. Left alone in Beauchamp tower, he laid down a plan of living to God, according to his Church, which he carried out in a way which takes the heart even while it provokes a smile. The two points of his duty were—how to pray and how to fast.

As to the first, he divided his day into three parts; morning, afternoon, and evening. In the morning he gave up two hours to prayer; in the afternoon he gave up one hour and a half; and in the evening, he gave a quarter of an hour to severe examination of his conscience. But this arrangement did not satisfy him long; and, being troubled in his mind about the worldliness of his life, he added to his devotions a recital of the priestly office.

As to the second, he began, immediately after his condemnation, to fast three days in the week; Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; on which days he would touch neither fish nor flesh. When his health gave way under this stern rule, he altered it, so far as to eat flesh once on Monday, and fish once on Wednesday. He gave up wine; though he took a little metheglin for his stomach's sake. On the day of his sentence he felt so wasted that he was induced to have a little supper in his room. On certain feasts of his church, as on the vigil of the Feast of Corpus Christi, of Ascension Day, and of the Virgin, he would touch neither food nor drink. Yet this strict rule was carried out in such sly and serpentine ways, that the new Lieutenant, Sir Michael Blount, and the keepers appointed by the Queen, never heard of his fasts and prayers.

Philip engaged a man of enormous appetite to wait upon him. When the viands were brought into his room and laid upon the table, his servants were sent out, and the door was shut fast; then the man with enormous appetite fell upon the dishes and tankards; ate up the meats, tossed off the wines; clearing the trenchers of their contents, just as when Arundel dined on ordinary days.

Philip was proud of the tablet which he had written over the fireplace, and he not only stood before it for hours at a time, repeating the pious phrase:

Quanto plus afflictionis pro Christo in hoc sæculo,
Tanto plus gloriæ cum Christo in futuro,

but pointed the words out to his servants and visitors for their remembrance when he should be no more.

One of his chief sorrows as a prisoner was the news which came to him in Beauchamp tower, that his wife's confessor and his own correspondent, Father Southwell, was arrested, tried, condemned, and hung.

Philip lingered on, in his ascetic way, for ten years, and died at length of a roasted teal. Long fasting had so slackened his powers, that the roast teal brought on a cast, which ended in dysentery. Of course, some voices cried out poison, and his old servant Nicholas Rainberde, was accused of having bribed his cook to put poison in the dish. Rainberde had some quarrel with his lord about money. But the rumour of foul play soon died the death of all noxious things. When Philip was dying, Sir Michael Blount, the Lieutenant, came to his bedside and asked his forgiveness for any offence which he might have given him in discharging his duties. "Do you ask forgiveness?" said Philip. "Why, then I forgive you in the same sort as I desire myself to be forgiven at the hands of God." The two men grasped each other's hands. But then the Earl, weak and wayward to the last, rose on his pillow, and looking Blount in the face, cried, "You have showed me and my men very hard measures." "Wherein, my lord?" asked the surprised Sir Michael. "Nay," said the Earl, "I will not make a recapitulation of anything. . . . . Remember, good Mr. Lieutenant, that God, who with His finger turneth the unstable wheel of this variable world, can in the revolution of a few days bring *you* to be a prisoner also, and to be kept in the same place where now you keep others."

The Jesuits say it was a prophetic voice. Certainly, the Earl had not been dead two months before Sir Michael Blount had lost his place, and was himself a prisoner in Beauchamp tower.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

THE most eminent and interesting prisoner ever lodged in the Tower is Raleigh; eminent by his personal genius, interesting from his political fortune. Raleigh has in higher degree than any other captive who fills the Tower with story, the distinction that he was not the prisoner of his country, but the prisoner of Spain.

Many years ago I noted in the State Papers evidence, then unknown, that a very great part of the second and long imprisonment of the founder of Virginia was spent in the Bloody tower and the adjoining Garden house; writing at this grated window; working in the little garden on which it opened; pacing the terrace on this wall, which was afterwards famous as Raleigh's Walk. Hither came to him the wits and poets, the scholars and inventors of his time; Jonson and Burrell, Hariot and Pett; to crack light jokes; to discuss rabbinical lore; to sound the depths of philosophy; to map out Virginia; to study the shipbuilder's art. In the Garden house he distilled essences and spirits; compounded his great cordial; discovered a method (afterwards lost) of turning salt water into sweet; received the visits of Prince Henry; wrote his political tracts; invented the modern warship; wrote his History of the World.

Many other vaults and cells in the Tower assume the glory of having been Raleigh's home; the hole in Little Ease, the recess in the crypt, Martin tower, Beauchamp tower; but these assumptions find no warrant in actual fact. Raleigh lay in the Tower four several times, and in his third and fourth imprisonments his room was changed; but we know his exact resting-place in each of these trials. During his first restraint he was lodged in the Brick tower, the residence of his cousin, Sir George (afterwards Lord) Carew, Master of the Ordnance. During his second restraint he was lodged in the Bloody tower. During his third restraint he was lodged in the same; until, on account of failing health, he was suffered to change that cell for the Garden house in which Latimer had lain. In his fourth restraint, after the Guiana voyage, he was lodged in the Wardrobe tower, until the last change of all occurred, when he was transferred to the topmost room of his first prison, the Brick tower.

He was never lodged in the dark hole of the crypt, now shown and figured as Raleigh's cell.

In a pleasant room of Durham House, in the Strand, —a room overhanging a lovely garden, with the river, the old bridge, the towers of Lambeth Palace, and the flags of Paris Garden and the Globe in view,—three men may have often met and smoked a pipe in the days of Good Queen Bess, who are dear to all readers of English blood; because, in the first place, they were the highest types of our race in genius and in daring; in the second place, because the work of their hands has shaped the whole after-life of their countrymen in every sphere of enterprise and thought.

That splendid Durham House, in which the nine days' queen had been married to Guilford Dudley, and which had afterwards been the town house of Elizabeth, belonged to Sir Walter Raleigh, by whom it was held on lease from the Queen. Raleigh, a friend of William Shakespeare and the players, was also a friend of Francis Bacon and the philosophers. Raleigh is said to have founded the Mermaid Club; and it is certain that he numbered friends among the poets and players. The proofs of his having known Shakespeare, though indirect, are strong. Of his long intercourse with Bacon every one is aware.

Thus, it requires no effort of the fancy to picture these three men as lounging in a window of Durham House, puffing the new Indian weed from silver bowls, discussing the highest themes in poetry and science, while gazing on the flower-beds and the river, the darting barges of dame and cavalier, and the distant pavilions of Paris Garden and the Globe.

With the exception of his two friends, Raleigh has had more books written about him than any other man of English race. Every new generation begins with unslackening curiosity about this proud and brilliant man,—curiosity as to what he was, what he said, and what he wrought. Men who are yet young have seen a dozen new lives of Raleigh; and men who are now old may live to see many more.

This public interest in Raleigh seems, at first thought, strange. The man was not lovable; he had some bad qualities; his career was apparently a failure. Yet Raleigh is one of the undoubted heroes of English story; one of the men about whom authors love to write and the public delight to read.

The reasons for what seems at first sight a contradiction are not far to seek.

In the first place, every one feels that Raleigh, when all has been said against him, was a *man;* a proud man, if you like; nay, a cruel and selfish man, if you insist; yet a vital force in the city, in the court, in the camp; not a form, a phrase, a convention, as the masses of men are and must be in every age and in every place. You may like an original force in your midst, or you may dislike it; most men distrust a power which disturbs them with a sense of the untried and the unknown; but you cannot help being drawn towards such a force for either love or hate. Raleigh was a man; and what a man! Even among a race of giants to what a size he grew! Other men, when we come to them, may be great in parts; this man was great in all parts. From the highest masters in special arts he had nothing to learn. Spenser could not teach him song. Hatton was danced by him out of court and fortune. Burghley feared his subtlety and craft. Mayerne took lessons from him in physic. Jonson consulted him on dramatic art. Effingham praised him as a sailor. Bacon thought it an honour to contend with him for the prize of eloquence. Hawkins, Frobisher, all the adventurous seamen of his generation, looked upon him as their master. Bilson retired from a tussel with him on theology, admitting his defeat. Pett learned from Raleigh how to build ships. No man of his generation offered to compete with him as a writer of English prose. Even in the trifle of personal beauty few were his equals. Poet, student, soldier, sailor, courtier, orator, historian, statesman—in each and every sphere he seemed to have a special power and a separate life.

In the second place, Raleigh is still a power among us; a power in the Old World and in the New World; hardly more visible in England than in America, where the capital of the State of North Carolina bears his name. Raleigh's public life was spent in raising England to her true rank; and the mode by which he sought to raise her was by making her the mother of Free States.

In Raleigh's time the leading influence on this planet lay in Spain; an influence which was hostile to England in every way; hostile to her religion, hostile to her commerce, hostile to her liberty, hostile to her law. Spain continued to assume that the English were a God-abandoned people, whom it was her sacred duty to chastise and save. She sent her spies and bravos into London. She landed her troops in Connaught.

By her gold and by her craft she raised up enemies against our peace beyond the Scottish border and in the Low Country camps. Even when her policy was that of peace, she drove our ships from the ocean and cast our sailors into prison. She closed the Levant against our merchants, and forbade all intercourse of England with America. Every foe of this country found in her a friend. She sharpened the dirks of Babington and his crew. She stirred up Rome against us. When she could not fight, she never ceased to plot. If the Irish kernes rebelled, she flung her troops into Cork; regular troops, who fought under her banner; and only disavowed them when they failed. In brief, at all times, in all places, our fathers had to count with Spain as their most deadly foe.

Against that country Raleigh set his teeth. It was Spain which he braved in Guiana; which he humiliated at Cadiz; which he outwitted in Virginia. Towards Spain the most splendid Englishman ever born nursed the hostile passion which Hannibal fed against Rome. In the end, a great country wears out a great man; and after fighting Spain for forty years, fighting her with the sword and with the pen, Raleigh was murdered, at the command of Philip the Third, in Palace Yard.

Raleigh's life divides itself into three main periods: the first period ending with his seduction of Bessie Throgmorton, the Queen's maid of honour; the second period with his arrest by Cecil, on a charge of conspiring to raise Arabella Stuart to the throne; the third period with his execution in Palace Yard, on the demand of his great enemy, Philip the Third. Sunshine floods the first; tempests beat the second; gloom enwraps the third.

Raleigh's first detention in the Tower, which can scarcely be called an imprisonment, was caused by his affair with Bessie Throgmorton, one of the stars of Queen Elizabeth's court. Bessie was lovely, witty, and an orphan. All the gay lordlings of the court admired her. Tall, slender, fair, with light blue eyes and golden hair, she was a perfect contrast to Raleigh, whose dark and saturnine beauty half repelled while it strangely allured the beholder's eye. Bessie listened to his words, as shepherdesses listen to their swains in those pastoral tales which were only too much in vogue.

> As at noon Dulcina rested
> In her sweet and shady bower,
> Came a shepherd . . .

the like of whom has seldom tempted woman to her sorrow. He was no lout with bill and crook; but a shining youth, bright with the sun and tawny with the sea. Spenser has pictured him in glowing verse. "The Shepherd of the Ocean," he was hight; but the softer arts were all to him like the sciences of the sea. He knew them all; and most, as Spenser writes, he knew the seducing phrase of love.

> Full sweetly tempered is that muse of his,
> That can empierce a prince's mighty heart.

Dulcina listened to his lays, and whispering tongues soon bore the news of her deception to the Queen.

Elizabeth was deeply hurt; not, as the triflers say, because Raleigh deserted her side for that of a younger beauty; but because he sullied her court and wronged his own manhood by that scandalous amour. To Bessie, her orphan maid of honour, the Queen was like a mother; and friends at court sent word to Raleigh, who was then at Chatham, making ready for a voyage, that he would have to stay at home and wed a wife. The lover laughed over words which he received as an idle threat. "Marry," he cried, "there is none on the face of the earth that I will be fastened unto." But the Queen was not a woman to forgive him such a deed; and when he slipt away to sea in the *Garland*, hoping to fall in with the Spanish silver fleet, and come home crowned with glory and rich with spoil, she sent Sir Martin Frobisher in her swift pinnace, the *Disdain,* to fetch him back.

Given in charge to his cousin, Sir George Carew, Master of the Ordnance, he lived in the spacious Brick tower, Carew's official residence, until he married the maid of honour, when he left his prison with the young and lovely woman, who was at once his brightest glory and his darkest shame. Much of the grace of life departed from Raleigh when Bessie was deceived. Repentance came, but came too late. The Queen appeared to forgive him; but the outrage lived in her heart, and Raleigh never became for her again the hero of his spotless prime.

On the coming in of James the First, Raleigh returned to his imprisonment in a new cause; to suffer in which was worthy of even his fame and genius. He came back to the Tower a sacrifice for his native land.

The new king had a policy of his own, of which amity with Spain was the corner-stone.

James had the strange disease, so rare in Scottish men, of physical cowardice. He was not tender of heart; he was, in fact, so fond of seeing pain that he more than once came down to the Tower, that he might feast his eyes on broken joints and quivering flesh; yet his life was spent in one long spasm of personal fear. He fainted at the sight of a drawn sword; he trembled at the roar of saluting guns; the name of a renowned warrior filled him with superstitious dread. On this base weakness, the adversaries of his country worked. They filled his mind with pictures of secret poisoners and assassins; so that his dreams became hot with visions of Jesuits and conspirators; and his soul was cowed by phantoms, taking the shape of agile and unscrupulous men, who from the vantage-ground of a distant court could either drop arsenic into his wine, or sharpen against him a bravo's knife.

James found by private question, that he could have peace with Philip the Third on one condition : ruin of the man who had sworn undying enmity to Spain, and to all that Spain then represented in the world. As a first step towards peace, he was told that Raleigh must be thrown into the Tower.

In his second restraint, Raleigh was not lodged in a kinsman's house, but in the more courtly and ominous Bloody tower, under the immediate eyes of Sir John Peyton, the Lieutenant, a man whose zeal in the new King's service was quickened by hints that in case of Raleigh's ruin he might receive, as his share of the spoil, the governorship of Jersey, one of the many high offices which his prisoner held. How Peyton was to earn this guerdon we can only guess; but more than one great councillor was known to have said that the King's coming in would be Raleigh's *doom.*

The confinement was close and the treatment mean. Cecil told the world that Raleigh's lodgings in the Tower were as pleasant as the rooms in Durham House; but the Lieutenant's weekly bills tell a different tale. He had only two small chambers; only two servants were allowed him ; and the charge for diet, coals and candles, for his household, was four pounds a week.

The pretext for his seizure was a parley which he had held with Lord Cobham on affairs of state. Cobham was a disappointed man. Most of his kinsfolk were in office. His brother-in-law, Sir Robert Cecil, was the first Secretary of State; his father-in-law, Effingham, Lord Admiral ; his wife's cousin, Lord Henry Howard, a Privy Councillor; yet his own great talents were thrust aside. An idea struck him, that he could bring himself into notice by espousing the claim of Arabella Stuart to the throne ; in favour of which claim he felt sure that he could count on Spain. This project he broached to Raleigh, who laughed in his face as a dreamer ; and that light laugh sent Raleigh to the Tower—as an accomplice in the Arabella Plot !

CHAPTER XXX

THE ARABELLA PLOT.

DURING the first three months of James's reign a very sharp struggle for power took place, the men in office wishing to keep in, the men out of office trying to get in. Cecil, Howard, Effingham, were in; Raleigh, Cobham, Northumberland, were out. Those who were in were the men of peace; those who were out were the men of war. Each party accused the other of foul play, of setting up pretenders, of intriguing with foreign courts. The men in power had the great advantage over their rivals of material strength; of having in their control the fleet, the guards, the bench, the Tower, and the block.

A dozen mad schemes were known to be on foot; any one of which might be called a plot, should Sir Robert Cecil see cause to arrest a friend. Cobham was prattling of Arabella. Percy was sulking at Sion. Grey wanted favours for the Puritans. Watson and Clarke, two seminary priests, were eager to serve the Pope. Copley, one of Cecil's spies, who lived in the best Catholic society, kept his master informed of all these movements; so that when Cecil struck his blow, the Tower was pretty nigh filled with victims; among whom he counted Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Cobham, Lord Grey of Wilton, Sir Griffin Markham, George Brooke, a young brother of Lord Cobham, Anthony Copley the spy, and the two secular priests, William Watson and William Clarke.

Lord Cobham had lodgings in the Lieutenant's house; but the contriver of what Cecil called the Arabella Plot, was kept in close confinement, with only a single servant to wait upon him day and night.

Few things in the story of our State prison strike the imagination like the change which a few days of sharp privation wrought in the character of this rich and powerful peer. When out of peril, Cobham appeared to be frank and fair. Faults he had in plenty; but his vices were those of a warm and generous nature; pride in his house, heat in his blood, an insatiable greed of gold, an unconquerable lust of power. Yet a few weeks of sharp privation broke his spirit. In the court he had been a bold and saucy baron; in the Tower he became a mean and abject serf. He knew that the judges and councillors who came down to question him could not torture him on account of his nobility; but he also knew that these judges and councillors could take away his life; and life was a thing which this degenerate bearer of the name of Cobham prized above either an easy conscience or a stainless name.

To the great misfortune of Raleigh, this rich court friend was connected by marriage with the families of Howard and of Cecil; both of whom might hope to profit by his death. His wife was sent to tell him that his only hope of saving his neck was to bring about Raleigh's ruin; and when Cecil, the chief of his inquisitors, told him the odious lie that Raleigh had accused him of high treason in the matter of Arabella, he pronounced the very words which Cecil wanted from his lips. If he were guilty of high treason, he said, Raleigh was guilty too, since he had been a partaker in all his plans. Cecil knew that the second lie was like the first; but knowing the value of lies to a clever and unscrupulous lawyer, he sent Cobham's falsehood to the Attorney-General, Sir Edward Coke.

Raleigh found means to communicate with Cobham in the Lieutenant's house. In fact, he made a friend of Peyton's son, also called Sir John, by whom messages were carried between the two prisoners. Cobham, looking out of his room, saw young Peyton standing in the garden talking to Raleigh at a window, and when the young man came to see him, two or three hours later, he cried out: "I saw you with Sir Walter Raleigh. God forgive him! He hath accused me; but I cannot accuse him." Peyton replied, "That is what he says of you. You have accused him; but he cannot accuse you."

Next day (as it would seem) Cecil came down to the Tower, with a view to complete his case for Coke by a final examination of Cobham. To his amazement, Cobham retracted every word which he had said. Raleigh had nothing to do with his plots; had never adopted Arabella's claims; had never spoken of Spanish help. Under such a change, the Council, as Count de Beaumont wrote to Henri, found it very difficult to proceed in the charge.

Then came out a mysterious rumour that the great offender had laid hands upon himself. For some days it had been whispered in court and city that Raleigh was morose and proud; a prey to melancholy thoughts and restive dreams; as though he were aching of some inward sore. At length, the rumour ran that Raleigh, sitting at Peyton's table, as his custom was, had snatched up a knife, bared his breast, and plunged the steel into his flesh. He was not dead. The point had struck on a bone and glanced aside from the vital part; on which Raleigh had thrown away the weapon, crying, "There, an end."

For reasons which may be guessed, the court desired this bruit to spread. Cecil spoke of it, and wrote of it, to several persons. He told the tale to Signor Molino, ambassador from the Doge of Venice; he wrote it to Sir Thomas Parry, his agent at the court of Henri the Great. Of course he sent the news to James, who was in the country. James was highly pleased, for an attempt at suicide seemed to him proof of Sir Walter's guilt. James wrote back to Cecil, "Let him be well probed; have a good preacher with you; and make him see that it is his soul he should wound and not his body."

It is impossible to believe this story true. Raleigh never spoke of an attempt on his own life. Cecil dropped the tale when it had served his turn. Coke, though straining every act and word of the accused into the vile suggestion that he cared for neither God nor devil, passed over this damning proof. Had the tale been true, would not Coke have told it in open court?

Again, if such a man as Raleigh had wished to kill himself, how could he have failed? A man has choice of a thousand deaths, and Raleigh was familiar with them all. He had knives in his cell. He had about him spirits and poisons of many sorts. He could have opened a vein; he could have thrown himself from the wall. Raleigh knew that nothing is easier than for a willing mind to part with life. When, in his later troubles, Wilson spoke of seizing his jars and simples on the ground that he might some day poison himself and escape from justice, Raleigh answered with contempt, "Why, man, if I wished to die, could I not dash my head against that wall?"

A few years ago, a letter was printed for the first time, pretending to be written by Raleigh to his wife, which seemed to support Cecil's tale. That letter is not only a forgery, but a very impudent forgery. Its purpose was, not to sustain the lie about Raleigh's project of suicide, but to taint his name as an unfaithful husband to his wife. Of course that letter was not read on the trial; of course it is only a copy; and equally of course the original is not known. The copy was found among a lawyer's papers; a lawyer who was employed against Raleigh in his later days;

and the paper was probably one of the countless forgeries which his enemies had the baseness to prepare, but not the hardihood to produce.

Many persons suspected that the rumour of suicide was sent abroad as a test of public feeling. James was afraid of Raleigh's name. "I ha' heard rawly of thee, mon," was his first greeting of the hero of Cadiz and Guiana. Indeed, that name was a power in the land before which a bolder prince than James might have bent his brows. During Raleigh's first restraint in the Brick tower, Elizabeth had been moved by reports of his amazing credit with her fleet. As a seaman, Raleigh stood alone. Essex owned in him a master; and Effingham, though bearing the rank of Lord High Admiral of England, had been seen to pay him the extraordinary homage of wiping the dust from his shoes. If the king's advisers meant to "cut the throat" of such a man, it may have been thought wise to learn how a report of his sudden death in the Tower would be received in the city, in the fleet, and in foreign courts.

The result was probably such as to dissuade them from using violent means. We hear no more of Raleigh being probed. Cecil came to see him, without bringing the godly preacher who was to search into his soul. In three or four days the prisoner was reported well. Then Sir John Peyton was dismissed from his great office, and a new and less scrupulous Lieutenant, Sir George Harvey, was installed in his house.

The Peytons being sent away, as men unequal to their trust, a duel began between Cecil and Raleigh for the possession of Cobham's soul. The prize was not much; not worth either the inquisitor's craft or the statesman's skill; but fate had given into the hands of that weak and angry peer the power of either saving or destroying by a word the greatest hero in his native land.

Raleigh and Cecil were not ill matched; for if one had incomparably the finer genius, the other had incomparably the deeper craft. But Cecil was free, while his antagonist lay bound. Cecil was a minister who could send Cobham to the block; Raleigh was a fallen man, who could do him neither good nor harm. Yet Raleigh fought it out. If he could get at Cobham, he might work upon his deeper and better feelings. How was he to get at Cobham? The new Lieutenant was Cecil's creature; a man of low, serpentine ways; not radically wicked, yet fit for work of which a downright villain would have been ashamed. When Raleigh saw that he could do nothing with Sir George, he made a serviceable friend of Sir George's son; a brave lad, through whom he kept up an irregular correspondence with Cobham, who had been lately moved from the Lieutenant's house to the more distant and lonely Wardrobe tower.

A few weeks of harsh confinement in the Tower had so far unstrung Cobham's moral fibre, that he answered each of his questioners with a different tale; one day charging Raleigh with a guilty knowledge of his designs; next day drawing back that charge as a monstrous lie; a third day whining over a weakness which he could not help; a fourth going back to his original accusation, adding to it, blackening it; then, after a brief interval, on a fresh appeal to his moral sense, retracting every word that he had spoken when the fit of fear was on his soul. It was a sight to see. In the presence of men who held his life in their hands, this English Claudio, dazed by mortal terror, answered all questions as they bade him by their looks and tones. Still, he could not stick to these lies when they were sworn. On Raleigh's remonstrance, he withdrew his accusations, calling God to witness that now, and now only, he spoke the truth. Young Harvey brought this answer from the Wardrobe to the Bloody tower.

Raleigh knew that his young and devoted helper ran much risk in carrying messages to the Wardrobe tower; and when the time of his trial drew near, he employed his own servant, William Cottrel, to take an apple, into which he had put a note, and, watching his happy chance when no one saw him, to throw it into Cobham's room. This note contained a passionate prayer to Cobham that, for love of God, and the sake of his wife and children, he would tell the truth in writing, so that his last confession could be read in court. The Wardrobe tower, to which Cobham had been sent, was in a lonely quarter, looking on the Queen's garden. Cottrel threw in his apple and received an answer to his master's message. That answer contained these words in Cobham's hand :—

"To clear my conscience, satisfy the world, and free myself from the cry of your blood, I protest, upon my soul, and before God and his angels, I never had conference with you in any treason ; nor was ever moved by you to the thing I heretofore accused you of. . . . . And so God deal with me and have mercy on my soul, as this is true."

These words were penned four days before the prisoners left the Tower for Winchester. One week later, Cobham was in that city among his inquisitors, who persuaded him to declare that these last words sent to Raleigh had been got from him by artifice, and that they were not true!

Yet Cobham had made a statement to Sir George Harvey of the same kind, and of his own free-will. He had told Sir George that Raleigh knew nothing about his plot. This free and independent declaration of Raleigh's innocence Sir George Harvey kept back until the trial was over and the verdict given, when he told it in confidence to Cecil.

A rare Lieutenant of the Tower!

CHAPTER XXXI.

RALEIGH'S WALK.

AFTER those shameful scenes at Winchester, which Chief Justice Gaudy, one of the presiding judges, described on his dying bed as having degraded for ever the character of English justice, Raleigh was brought back to the Tower, and lodged in his previous room, the upper chamber of the Bloody tower, the hinder passage of which led out by a door to the terrace, now known as Raleigh's Walk. From this walk—his favourite exercise for years—he could look down, on one side over the wharf and river, on the other side over the Lieutenant's garden and the green.

No one thought as yet of his living in that room, of his pacing that walk, for fourteen years. The trial at Winchester exalted his credit for eloquence and patriotism; he was the idol and the hero of young and old. Nobody believed in the Arabella Plot; the Princess herself had never heard of it; and the hint that Raleigh, the hero of Cadiz, the founder of Free States, had been in league with Philip the Third against his country, was met by universal scorn. The noblest men and the holiest women were on Raleigh's side. Queen Anne admired him. Mary Sydney wrought for him, charging her son, Lord Pembroke, as he valued her blessing, to use his utmost power, and that of all his friends, in Raleigh's favour. Arabella did what she could. Cecil and Harvey kept their secret; yet no one believed that the great captain, who was engaged in planting a Free State in the New World, could be penned for many weeks in the Tower, to please the mortal enemies of their native land.

The allowance for diet, fire, and candle, was increased from four pounds a week to five. Two servants besides William Cottrel had warrants to share his cell. Thomas Hariot, and other friends, were suffered to see him; and Lady Raleigh and her boy, little Wat, were often at his side.

Early in this new imprisonment, hope came bounding into his cell. The King was coming to the Tower on an act of grace; coming in his state barge down the Thames, accompanied by the Queen and Prince, and followed by all his court; coming to make golden holidays; to throw open the doors of every vault, to set the prisoners free, and to crown his act of grace by a mighty feast and show. This tale was partly true. James sailed down the river; but the day before he landed at the Queen's stair his great prisoner was carried to the Fleet Prison, so that the king and a rout of lords and ladies might flutter through his empty cell.

Raleigh remained two weeks and a half in the Fleet, attended by his two servants, with the same allowance for food, fire, and candle as in the Tower. At the end of seventeen days, the court fooleries being then over, the prisoners were brought back and lodged once more in their empty cells.

It was long before either Raleigh or Lady Raleigh could be brought to see that the men in power were bent on holding him fast for life. Raleigh could not know that he was held in bonds for Spain; he could not tell the sums for which Cecil and Howard had sold him to Philip the Third. But neither Raleigh nor his wife was patient under wrong. Lady Raleigh came to live at the Tower with little Wat; and in the chamber in which King Edward had been killed, her second son, baby Carew, was born. But she could not sit by her husband's side, a silent witness of his pain. She was often at Sherborne Castle, their magnificent home in Dorset ; oftener still in the galleries of Whitehall, on the terraces of Windsor, among the fish-ponds at Theobalds ; wearying the King with her petitions, troubling the court with a remembrance of her wrongs. No captive ever found a bolder, a more winning advocate than Lady Raleigh. Her efforts were all in vain ; yet years passed by ere Raleigh could be brought to see that men who had served in the same field, sat on the same board with himself, under the great Queen, could sink into the depths of infamy into which Howard and Cecil had fallen as the pensioners of Spain.

Of course their high pretence was fear of Philip. If England wanted peace at any cost, why haggle in the chambers of Madrid? But they had lower motives. Rich in money and in friends, Raleigh might find a thousand ways of making his anger felt ; and they had done him wrongs which they could never expect a proud man to forgive. Exile would not serve with him, as with his fellow-captive Markham, whom they sent abroad, with leave to sell his sword in a foreign camp. Raleigh was too great a captain to send away in search of bread. If he went abroad, he might find not only bread but power ; for princely offers were being already made to him by foreign states. Henri of France strove hard to obtain his sword. The Dutch would have sent him to the Indies. Christiern of Denmark wanted him as admiral of his fleets. In Italy his services were sought. Had Raleigh been thrown into a boat, like an old Celtic criminal, and turned adrift at sea with a jar of water and a pole, he would probably have been found in three or four years directing the councils and leading the forces of some powerful king.

Not daring to deal with him as they would have dealt with ordinary men, they locked him fast in the Tower and plundered his estates. One of the spoilers, sad to say, was the great sailor Effingham, who had once thought it no dishonour to be seen wiping the dust from Raleigh's shoes with his own silken cloak. Though Effingham was rich and old, he begged for Raleigh's wine-patent; the chief source of his old friend's income, the reward for many years of service; and he got it. "His lordship hath six thousand pounds," wrote Lady Raleigh, "and three thousand pounds a year, by my husband's fall." Effingham claimed still more, and the weak King, whose penniless cousin he had married, gave him what he asked. "If his conscience warrant him," wrote Lady Raleigh, in despair, "we must yield to God's will and the King's. . . . The bread and food taken from me and my children will never augment my lord's table, though it famish us."

In the stress of his poverty, Raleigh had to part from some of those companions who lived at his board and slept under his roof. One of the nearest of these old friends was Thomas Hariot, the famous voyager and algebraist, from whose "Brief View of Virginia," Raleigh learned much of his geography, and from whose "Artis Analytica Praxis," Des Cartes was accused of having stolen most of his mathematics. Raleigh had sent Hariot out to Virginia in 1584, and for the next twenty years had kept him in his household. When his fortunes were broken, his manors seized, and his means cut off, he gave this faithful servant of science a letter to Northumberland, who carried him down to Petworth, helped him in his studies, and settled on him a pension of £120 a year for life.

Though Raleigh was now lodged in the Tower, with three poor servants, living on five pounds a week for food and fire, the men in office considered him far too strong. His fame was rising, instead of falling. Great ladies from the court cast wistful glances at his room. Men from the streets and ships came crowding to the wharf whence they could see him walking on the wall.

Raleigh was a sight to see; not only for his fame and name, but for his picturesque and dazzling figure. Fifty-one years old; tall, tawny, splendid; with the bronze of tropical suns on his leonine cheek; a bushy beard, a round moustache, and a ripple of curling hair, which his man Peter took an hour to dress. Apparelled as became such a figure, in scarf and band of the richest colour and costliest stuff, in cap and plume worth a ransom, in jacket powdered with gems; his whole attire, from cap to shoe-strings, blazing with rubies, emeralds, and pearls; he was allowed to be one of the handsomest men alive.

The council got alarmed at the crowds who came down to see him. Harvey was thought too careless, and a stricter gaoler was appointed to take his place. Sir William Waad ("that villain, Waad," as Raleigh had only too much cause to style him) began his service as Lieutenant by proposing to abridge the very few liberties which Raleigh then enjoyed.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

THE VILLAIN WAAD.

AWAKEFUL spy and unscrupulous tool, one of the secret agents who had been employed by Cecil in watching Percy and Catesby, the Gunpowder Plotters, Waad was sent to the Tower in the hope that his evil genius might invent some method of connecting Raleigh with that plot.

Raleigh had, in truth, as much to do with the Gunpowder Plot as with the Arabella Plot, and it seemed likely enough that he would be tried again, if not sentenced again, on some new charge. Only the fear of an acquittal stopped the game.

In the little garden lying under Raleigh's Walk stood that Garden-house in which Latimer had lived; a small house of lath and plaster, which was now used by the warden as a hen-roost. Raleigh had obtained from Sir George Harvey the use of this Garden-house as a still-room for his experiments. He was bent on following Nature into her secret haunts. He wished to solve the great problem of converting salt water into fresh. He dreamt of cordials for preserving health, and even hoped to find an elixir of life. Some things he had already done in the way of cordials, the fame of which had taken wings.

One day the Countess de Beaumont, who had come down to the Tower with a bevy of ladies in her train, bowed to him as he was walking in his garden, and asked him if he would give her a little of his famous balsam of Guiana. He gallantly promised to prepare and send it. Waad, who could not bear to see great ladies bowing to his prisoner, wrote to Cecil, "Sir Walter Raleigh hath converted a little hen-house in the garden into a still, where he doth spend his time all day in his distillations. If a brick wall were built it would be more safe and convenient." Nor was this interference with his chemical labours all that he had to bear from Waad. A few months later, the Lieutenant found a fresh cause of offence in the popular homage paid to the man whom he had been set to watch. "Raleigh," he wrote to Cecil, "doth show himself upon the wall in his garden to the view of the people, who gaze upon him; which made me bold to restrain him again."

Slowly, very slowly, the man of action paled into the man of thought. Under Harvey's rule, nothing more had been heard of his pride and melancholy. He rose at dawn, curled his dark hair and beard, made an early meal, wrote all the morning, walked in his garden, played a game of bowls with Sir George, and quaffed a horn of good English beer. Dining at the Lieutenant's table, he chatted with the guests about Virginia and the Spanish main. As time went by, and no pardon came, he bent his mind to more serious work. A thousand things which had crossed him in his busier days, came back in his cell and occupied his thoughts. One of these subjects was the sufferings endured by men at sea from want of water fit for drink. Having caught the idea of a new method of purging the brine from water, he fell to work. Lighting his fires, and boiling his sea-water, he struck upon a way of expelling salt; a precious discovery, which he tested in his latest voyage, and found to act; but the secret of which was unhappily lost, with much that was still more precious, in Palace Yard. Two hundred years elapsed before men of science got the clue again, when Irving recovered the lost secret; but no doubt can exist as to Raleigh's claim. Wilson wrote down the words from Raleigh's lips:—"He fell to tell me of his inventing the means to make salt water fresh or sweet, by furnaces of copper in the forecastle, and distilling of the salt-water as it were by a bucket, putting in a pipe, and within a quarter of a hour it will run by a spigot, and the water as sweet as milk."

These studies, so precious to mankind, were interrupted by "that villain Waad," in the interest of his master Cecil, who was only too ready to propitiate his bountiful patrons in Madrid. Cecil was building Hatfield House; and that princely pile was being built and furnished with Spanish gold. If any excuse could be found for taking Raleigh's life, the student would be offered without scruple as a sacrifice to Philip the Third. If a pretext could not be found, it might be made.

When the Countess de Beaumont spoke to Raleigh in his garden, she had a gentleman in her train whom Raleigh knew by sight; Captain Whitelocke, a retainer of his old friend Northumberland. Whitelocke came down to the Tower for that balsam of Guiana which was to be made for the French countess. This was all that either Waad or Cecil knew; it was very little; yet it was nearly as good evidence as Coke had been able to adduce at Winchester in proof of his complicity in the Arabella Plot. Northumberland was a kinsman of Percy, one of the plotters; Whitelocke was a servant of Northumberland; Raleigh was an acquaintance of Whitelocke. On these grounds, Raleigh's name was entered on a suspected list; and commissioners were sent to examine him in the Bloody tower. Waad was one of these commissioners; and being the Lieutenant also, he had rare opportunities of making his obstinate and contemptuous prisoner feel his claws. Nothing could be wrung from Raleigh. Waad recommended the King to handle him more roundly, so as to break his pride; and on the villain's suggestion, Raleigh was put under close restraint. He was turned out of his still room, he was denied the use of his walk, and he was locked up in his cell at an early hour of the afternoon.

Lady Raleigh and her two boys were sent away from the Tower; and, in order to be near her husband, the poor lady was compelled to take lodgings on the hill outside, near Barking Church.

Under these new privations Raleigh's health gave way. Sleeping in a stone room, with little air, with no fire, the man of active life, whose feet had been on the quarter-deck, whose days on land had been spent in the saddle, broke down into a pitiable wreck of his former self. The winter being cold, his flesh became chilled and numb. One hand fell feebly to his side; the sinews of his arm shrank up. "Every second or third night," he wrote to Cecil, "I am in danger of either sudden death or of the loss of my limbs and senses, being sometimes two hours without feeling or motion of my hand and whole arm." Then he added, with some bitterness of heart, "I complain not; I know it is vain."

Peter Turner, a physician, who was allowed to see him, gave so bad an account of his condition that the very courtiers who were paid by Spain for keeping him, as it were, in chains, were startled into pity. His left side was described by the good doctor as quite numb; the fingers of his left hand were curled; his tongue was so hardened that he could not speak. The lodging in which he lay, said the physician, was too cold for any man to sleep in and he recommended that Waad should be ordered to remove him into a warmer room. Turner suggested that he should be lodged in that little Garden house in which Latimer had lain, and in which his own experiments had been made.

The men in office may have been moved by pity for an old friend; they may have seen their advantage in offering to indulge a dying hero. They had many troubles on their hands just then, and may have thought the prisoner in the Bloody tower a useful factor in their game. The King of Spain was causing them some trouble, and the name of Arabella Stuart was again in every man's mouth; for this royal lady had chosen to marry without the King's consent, and her youthful husband, himself a pretender to James's crown, was a fugitive in Philip's Flemish court.

For some of these reasons, the men in power relented so far towards the prisoner, that on Turner's formal request for a change being made, the Council gave orders to Waad for his removal from the Bloody tower into the little Garden house in which he kept his books and drugs.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE GARDEN HOUSE.

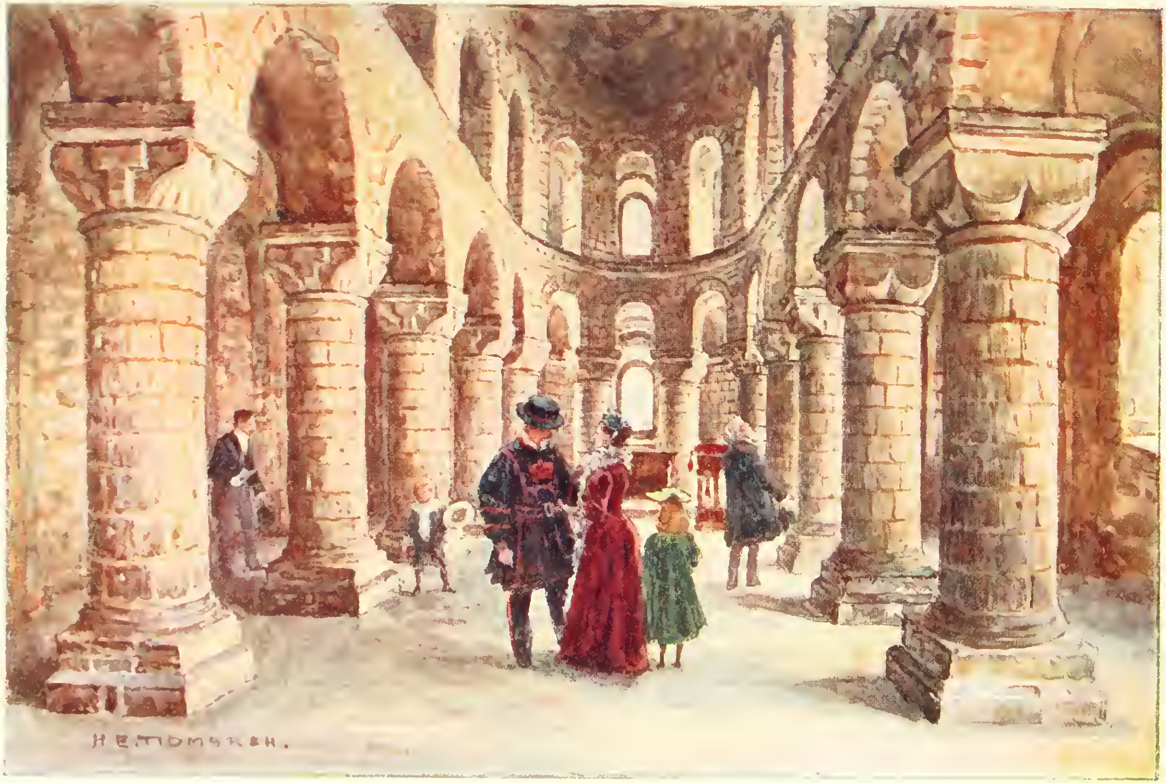
THE lodge into which Raleigh was moved, on the suggestion of his physician, leaned against the Tower wall. It was warm and dry; covered from the Thames blast, and peeping out among trees and flowers. In this Garden house Raleigh was to spend the noblest years of his life.

His first love was science. In the hope of finding a specific cure for every evil to which flesh, as flesh, is heir, Raleigh sat in his still-room, before his furnace and retort, day after day, year after year, questioning Nature with a keen eye, and tracking her secrets with a cunning hand. While he was bent on these great trials, he hit upon that powerful potion, which became widely known and universally admired, as Raleigh's Great Cordial.

Learned essays have been written to expound the virtues of this mixture; a blending of pearl, musk, hartshorn, bezoar stone, mint, borrage, gentian, mace, red rose, aloes, sugar, sassafras, spirits of wine, with twenty other things; a charm against disease which was high in favour, not alone with city madams and country squires, but with the noblest persons in the land; notably with Queen Anne, with her son Charles the First, and her grandson Charles the Second. The ablest chemists tried to improve it; the wisest physicians sought to explain it. Digby proposed to increase its power by adding viper's heart and flesh. Frasier studied the science of its combination. Lefebre, the French physician, wrote a treatise, by the king's command, on its sovereign virtues. Queen Anne believed that it saved her life. Charles the Second would take no other medicine; and even now the Great Cordial finds a place in our accepted medical schools.

Drawing from his little fire in the still-room, these spirits and essences of nature, Raleigh came to be regarded by simple folk as a great doctor. His room was filled with vases, jars, and phials; which that paid spy and profane rascal, Sir Thomas Wilson, afterwards described as containing "all the spirits in the world, except the Spirit of God." Men of science came to learn from him. The Wizard Earl stood by his side in the still-room. Hariot and Allen watched his experiments with a curious eye. Mayerne admitted his supreme knowledge of drugs, and went very near to allowing his superior skill in judging of disease. Folk sent to consult him in their sickness; and if he had been free to go about, he might have gained a very large practice as a medical man.

Hapless Lady Raleigh could not turn her heart to books and cordials. Raving on year by year, she could not be comforted and would not be silenced. In her ardent wrestling with her fate, she complained of him, the recluse of the Tower; saying, in her blind love, that even he would make no effort to get free. Absorbed with his books and phials, she fancied him wishing to be left alone to his own undoing. One day, as he sat before his desk writing, she burst into his room, just as she used to lie in wait for the King, holding little Wat by the hand, pressing her baby to her heart; and standing thus before her husband, she asked him how he could be so cruel to his wife and babes, as to sit there, wasting his life, in poring over books and maps? Poor captive! This was the hardest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THE CHAPEL OF ST. JOHN IN THE WHITE TOWER.

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trial he was called to bear. He could not blame her, and he could not help her.

Days, months, years went by. One by one his honours, offices, and estates were taken away by James. Durham House was one of the first to go. Sherborne Castle was still left to him; but Sir Robert Carr, a new and grasping favourite, having heard that the house was good, that the site was beautiful, that the soil was rich, begged it from the King. When Lady Raleigh threw herself at James's feet, beseeching him not to take the bread from her children's mouths, the King coarsely answered, "Madame, I maun ha' it; I maun ha' it for Carr." Lady Raleigh, hot with holy wrath, threw up her hands, and called on Heaven to launch its bolts on the man who robbed her fatherless children of their bread!

Those bolts were not long in coming.

Raleigh's lodge under the Tower wall became a court, to which a crowd of men who stood highest among the learned and the great repaired for profit and delight. Raleigh was still a centre. Bacon sought in him a patron of the new learning. Percy dined with him in the Lieutenant's house. Hariot brought him books and maps. Pett came over with his models; Jonson with his epigrams and underwoods. The *magi*—Hariot, Hues, and Warner, made a part of Raleigh's court. Selden was often here; Mayerne sometimes, Bilson now and then. Nor were these all. Queen Anne sent messages to the prisoner. Prince Henry rode down from Whitehall to hear him talk. The young prince, who was eager about his sister's marriage, learned from Raleigh to distrust the policy of a Savoy match; and from the same high source he caught his leaning towards the court of France. Princess Elizabeth looked on her brother's friend as her own best guide. For the young prince Raleigh wrote his "Discourse touching a marriage between Prince Henry of England and a daughter of Savoy;"

for the young princess his "Discourse touching a match between the Lady Elizabeth and the Prince of Piedmont." In both these treatises he gave new and deadly offence to his foes in Madrid. The Spanish faction at Whitehall were furious; for the prince and princess made no secret of their own adhesion to Raleigh's views. It seemed to those pensioners of Philip that Raleigh was establishing a second government in the Tower, from which he presumed to dictate his policy to the King. And they were right. Raleigh's writings struck the note of opposition, everywhere slumbering in men's hearts, against a match with either Spain or an ally of Spain. Elizabeth married a German prince; setting the example, so largely followed in all coming years, of seeking alliances for our reigning house, not among strange races, but among our own Teutonic kin.

But the talk of the old sailor and the young prince ran much on the sea, on ships, and on naval war, for which the lad was already quickening with heroic fire. Raleigh promised to reduce his thoughts on these high things to order, in a regular treatise on "The Art of War by Sea." Riding away from the Tower after one of the mornings thus spent, the Prince cried aloud to his attendants, "No man but my father would keep such a bird in a cage."

When the Prince fell sick; Queen Anne insisted that he should take Raleigh's cordial; a medicine which had saved her own life, she said, when every other remedy had failed. It came too late; the hope of England died; and the projected treatise on naval war was laid aside.

In this Garden house Raleigh finished, if he did not begin, the first part of his magnificent "History of the World;" a work without an original; though it has had a thousand successors. The tale there told in part was to have been a great prose epic; its theme, the life of man on our mother earth. In the eleventh year of his confinement, Raleigh produced one volume of his labours; all that he lived to write; and it is no new thing to say that this volume of universal history is one of the grandest fragments on our library shelf.

Opinions vary as to Raleigh's share in the production of his work. Ben Jonson told his friend Drummond, that the history was composed by a circle of wits; but this account can hardly have been true. Ben wrote the poetic prefix, though he did not dare to sign it. There, I think, the foreign work begins and ends. The style is uniform throughout; a style too pure for any other pen to claim. No doubt the historian sought such help as every historian seeks and finds. Burrell aided him with Hebrew; Hariot gave him hints on science; others may have helped him in questions beyond his ken. But the book, as book, is certainly Raleigh's own.

From the Garden house he sent forth other writings; some of great value, others trifles of the day. Among these works may be named "A Discourse on the Invention of Ships," and "Observations on the Sea Service."

But his main solace after all was the heroic work in which he had embarked his fame and fortunes from his earliest times; that of founding Free States; fighting the Spaniards with a weapon that would renew itself for ever. From the Bloody tower he directed operations in Guiana and in Virginia; never ceasing to drop his purse into that scale into which he could no longer dash his sword.

On the episode of Raleigh's release from prison, his western voyage, his unhappy return, and his fresh arrest, there is little need to dwell. These events make the history of England for one troubled and shameful year. When he came back a prisoner, he found his apartments in the Bloody tower and the Garden lodge occupied by his spoilers, Carr and his new wife, now Earl and Countess of Somerset.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE BRICK TOWER.

THE Brick tower stands on the northern wall, a little to the west of Martin tower, with which it communicates by a secret passage. This tower overlooks the lines from Brass Mount to Legge Mount, and sweeps the opposite slope and ditch. The men who held the Tower were gunners; and the captain of these troops was the real master of the Thames and of the approaches to London. Hence the Master of the Ordnance was generally a man of rank, and always a man of trust. In the reign of Elizabeth that office was filled by Charles, Earl of Devonshire; to whom succeeded George, Lord Carew, Raleigh's cousin, who held his post during the whole of James's reign.

The rooms being good, and the master seldom in residence, this house was placed at the disposal of any person of rank to whom the Government wished to show favour. Thus, when Raleigh was committed for his amour with the maid of honour, he was lodged in the master's house. Raleigh had the liberty of the Tower within the walls; he kept a great table, had a crowd of servants, and received the visits of many friends. The small upper room was filled by his domestics, and the brilliant seaman, looking on his recall from sea as a royal jest, could hardly have dreamt that in his wan and premature age that upper room, into which he would not willingly have thrust a dog, would become his own miserable home.

Northumberland, who had hired the Brick tower from Lord Carew, for his son Algernon's use, kept his tenancy until he was thrust out of his lodgings by Sir Thomas Wilson, with a view, as it would seem, to some such crime as that by which his grandfather had been done to death in the Bloody tower.

When Raleigh was brought back to the Tower, after his disastrous voyage, his old rooms in the Bloody tower and the Garden house being occupied by Lord and Lady Somerset, he was lodged for a few days with the Lieutenant, Sir Allan Apsley—a man who admired and loved him—until the spacious Wardrobe tower could be furnished and arranged for his use. In that pleasant chamber, looking on the Queen's garden and across the Thames, into which Cottrell had thrown the apple, he took up his abode, with his books, his globes, his phials, and his plants. Beginning his life anew, he set about the great experiments on which he had already spent his time to such noble ends. His rooms were large; and he had the free use of a garden. In the Wardrobe he kept his health, until Wilson came down from court on what was seen from the first to be a bloody purpose.

James was in a strait. The Spanish agents, who were promising him an Infanta for his son, were yelling in his ear for Raleigh's blood. The King, though willing enough to yield, was not daring enough to face the consequences of murdering Raleigh by legal means. In fact, while he did not scruple to do wrong, he shrank from the infamy which he felt would fall upon his name. If Raleigh would only kill himself, all would be well. Even if he could be taken off privately, so as to leave the case in doubt, it might be better than a public murder. Secretary Naunton, who knew the King's secret wishes, found Wilson in his pay, and thought him the man to repeat Bailiff's work. Naunton brought Wilson into James's presence, and from that secret interview with the King, the wretch came down to the Tower and surveyed his ground. The moment he was seen, a whisper ran about the Tower that he had come to murder Raleigh; on which the honest Lieutenant, Sir Allan Apsley, stood upon his guard. Apsley not only admired his prisoner, but wished to avoid his foregoer's fate.

Wilson had brought down to Sir Allan a most unusual warrant. This order from the Council authorised Wilson to take charge of Raleigh; to remain constantly in his company; to keep him a close prisoner; to prevent any one from speaking with him, or even coming near him, except in case of necessity, and only then in his own presence. Apsley, though he must have been surprised, was not cowed. A Lieutenant of the Tower, he was responsible to the law for what took place within the gates; and, though he admitted Wilson into the Wardrobe by day, he turned him out at night, and resolutely objected to give up his keys. Wilson complained to Naunton that he could do nothing in that place and in that way. The Wardrobe tower, he said, was a big house, with two windows, from either of which letters might be thrown into the Queen's garden, and through which nearly everything passing in Raleigh's chamber might be seen. He wanted a place, he said, less open to observation; one in which his prisoner would have to sleep in a room either above or within his own. Such a place, he said, after searching the Tower from end to end, he had found in the house then occupied by Lord Percy. These rooms he must have. But the Earl of Northumberland, having hired these lodgings for his son, refused to give them up, just as Sir Allan Apsley refused to give up his keys. Wilson went back to his employers. Not give up the keys? Not give up the Brick tower? A peremptory order came from court, which showed Sir Allan who was now to be master in the Tower. Apsley was ordered to give up Raleigh into Wilson's charge ; to allow him the Brick tower as a lodging ; to deliver up the keys ; to send away Raleigh's servant, and replace him by one of Wilson's men. Sir Allan was forbidden to let any doctor see his prisoner, except in Wilson's presence and by his consent.

Naunton wrote to Wilson that the King was pleased with what was done ; that he waited the ripening of his prescription ; that he hoped Wilson would get the better hand of the hypocrite ; and that he felt much comfort in the knowledge that he should not be troubled with Raleigh long.

If Secretary Naunton's words do not imply the intention to murder Raleigh, language has no meaning.

With the cunning of his black purpose, Wilson lodged his captive in the topmost room of the Brick tower, while he appropriated Lord Carew's comfortable chambers to himself and his men. "I have been employed," he wrote to the King's secretary, "in removing this man to safer and higher lodging, which, though it seems nearer heaven, yet is there no means of escape from thence for him to any place but hell." In the Wardrobe, Raleigh had kept up his chemical experiments, the value of which he had tested in his late voyage, when he put his copper furnace on board his ship, and gave out to each of his crew of two hundred and forty men, several quarts of fresh water every day. Wilson took away his drugs and phials, under the absurd pretence that he might poison himself. "Why," said Raleigh, with contempt, "if I want to kill myself, I can dash my head against that wall." The ignorant apothecaries who seized his jars and spirits, said they could not answer for the effect of swallowing his stuff unless they knew what it was made of ; and through the violence of these mountebanks the great secret of distilling salt water into sweet was lost to mankind.

Yet the mysterious hint which had given the King such comfort bore no fruit. If Wilson meant murder, he found no opportunity to carry out his plan. Indeed, to assassinate such a master of fence as Raleigh would have been no easy work, and a mean and brutal coward like Wilson was hardly the man to try. Raleigh would have spurned him like a dog, or felled him like a slave. Nor could Wilson draw his prisoner to the point of suicide. Day after day he put a knife, as it were, into his captive's hand, by talking of men who had killed themselves to escape a shameful death. Raleigh would not take his hints. Once, when he praised the old Roman senators, Wilson hoped that something would ensue; but his prisoner gave no sign of following the

> High Roman fashion,

and when Wilson renewed the subject another day, Raleigh spoke very gravely against self-murder, saying that for himself he would die in the light of day and in the face of his countrymen.

The Spaniards could not wait. They clamoured for his death; the King of Spain declaring, under his own hand and seal, that Raleigh must be instantly put to death. To the last moment there was doubt and strife at court. The Queen was for saving Raleigh; and the Queen was supported in her efforts by all those persons who leaned towards the policy of a French alliance for the Prince of Wales. Spain tempted the King with a larger dowry than France. Queen Anne said she did not care for money; and would prefer a French princess for her son, to an Infanta with all her gold. But gold tempted James, and the profligate minion of James. Finally, the order for his execution—the end for which he had waited long—was signed.

Wilson, who had failed in his infamous mission, was sent away; the Brick tower was restored to the honourable custody of Sir Allan; and the last ten days of Raleigh's life on earth were spent in peace. The bitterness of strife was passed; he knew that he must now die; and with the certainty of his fate came back to him, not only his high spirit, his ready wit, and his gay demeanour, but in some degree his physical health.

The warrant for his death reached the Tower at eight o'clock on a dark October morning. Raleigh was in bed; but on hearing the Lieutenant's voice, he sprang lightly to his feet, threw on his hose and doublet, and left his room. At the door he met Peter, his barber, coming in. "Sir," said Peter, "we have not curled your head this morning." Raleigh smiled; "Let them comb it that shall have it." Peter followed him to the gate, while Raleigh kept on joking in his usual vein. "Peter," he asked, "canst thou give me any plaster to set on a man's head when it is off?"

Next day it was off in Palace Yard; the proudest head that ever rolled into English dust.

That day was thought to be a very sad day for Englishmen. The partisans of Spain went mad with joy.

Yet the victory was not to Spain. A higher power than man's directs the course of a nation's life; the death of a hero is not a failure; for the martyr's blood is stronger than a thousand swords. The day of Raleigh's death was the day of a new English birth. Eliot was not the only youth of ardent soul who stood by the scaffold in Palace Yard, to note the matchless spirit in which the martyr met his fate, and walk away from that solemnity—a new man. Thousands of men in every part of England who had led a careless life became from that very hour the sleepless enemies of Spain. The purposes of Raleigh were accomplished, in the very way which his genius had contrived. Spain held the dominion of the sea, and England took it from her. Spain excluded England from the New World, and the genius of that New World is English.

The large contest in the new political system of the world, then young, but clearly enough defined, had come to turn upon this question—Shall America be mainly Spanish and theocratic, or English and free? Raleigh said it should be English and free. He gave his blood, his fortune, and his genius, to the great thought in his heart; and, in spite of that scene in Palace Yard, which struck men as the victory of Spain, America is at this moment English and free.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE ANGLO-SPANISH PLOT.

DURING the fourteen years through which Raleigh wrote in the Bloody tower and lit his fires in the Garden house, a line of prisoners, more or less closely linked with his fortunes, passed into the Tower; some of them to spend within these vaults a week of doubt and pain; others to die in them a daily death for years; this man to baffle his keeper and slip his chain; that man to fret out his soul against bolt and bar; while most of their fellows in mishap were only too glad to escape from damp and gloom, from wheel and cord, by way of either the hangman's rope or the headsman's axe.

The first of these prisoners, in point of time, was Thomas, Lord Grey of Wilton Castle, who lived nine years in the Brick tower on the northern wall. With Grey came William Watson and William Clarke, two secular priests, the alleged companions of his crime. These men were followed by Guy Fawkes and his companions, who were thrown into the dungeons of the Keep; by Fathers Garnet and Oldcorne, who were lodged in the lower rooms of the Bloody tower; by Father Fisher, who has left his name on a door-post in the White tower; by the Earl of Northumberland, "the Wizard Earl," who lay in the Martin tower; by Lady Arabella Stuart, who lived and died in the Belfry and the Lieutenant's house; by her husband, William Seymour, who escaped from the Water gate; by the Countess of Shrewsbury, who occupied the Queen's lodgings; by Sir Thomas Overbury, who was poisoned in the Bloody tower; and on the morrow of Raleigh's liberation, by Lord and Lady Somerset, who lived and quarrelled in the Bloody tower and the Garden house. All these prisoners may be called the Raleigh group.

The story of this group of prisoners is that of the rise and fall of a great conspiracy, the Anglo-Spanish Plot. This conspiracy endured through many years, survived various chiefs, and put on divers shapes. It had a foreign birth and a foreign end, though it was conducted on the English soil by English hands. Conceived in the cabinet of King Philip, it was prepared in the English Colleges of Douai and Valladolid, and put into action in our London suburbs and our midland shires. The men who begun it were Jesuits, and the pupils of Jesuits; the men who continued it were Councillors and Peers; but whether the work was done by Persons and Garnet, or by Cecil, Suffolk, and Northampton, the purpose kept in view at Madrid was ever the same—the subordination of our national life to that of Spain.

While the Jesuits held the reins, the motive power was religious zeal; when the Councillors held the reins, the motive power was gold. Though trained in a foreign school, the Jesuits could only be persuaded to serve the King of Spain so long as they felt that, in serving him, they were doing their duty to God and Holy Church. The Peers who succeeded to their office as "Friends of Spain," allowed no such scruples to stay their course. Having a country to sell, they made their infamous bargains with the Spanish ambassador, and built such palaces as those of Hatfield and Charing Cross on the wages of their shame.

This Anglo-Spanish Plot was the mother of many treasons. The Essex rising—the Priests' Plot—the

Main and the Bye—the Seymour Escape—and the Powder Poisoning, were but details springing from a common source.

The chief of this plot for many years was Henry Garnet, Prefect of the English Jesuits.

The Prefect, a square bluff man, of middle age, much worn by care, if not by drink, and looking ten years older than he was, had a string of different names. In Flanders he was known as Father Greene, Father Whalley, and Father Roberts. In England he passed under the priestly names of Father Garnet, Father Darcy, and Father Walley; under the lay names of Mr. Farmer and Mr. Mese. He had as many homes as names; not to speak of the houses of his penitents and pupils, which were to him as homes. He had a house called White Webbs, in Enfield Chase; a lodging in Thames Street, near Queenhithe; a secluded residence on Wandsworth Common; an old manor at Erith, which he used for the coming and going of his agents by the Thames.

This man of many names and domiciles is said to have kept a merry table. He was accused of a fondness for female society which ill became a priest, and the name of Helen Brooksby was coupled with this hint of frailty, even more than that of her sister Ann Vaux. These hints of an undue fondness for wine and women rest, not on the words of his Protestant enemies, but on those of his Catholic friends—most of all, on the words of his fellow-confessors.

It would be unfair to urge against Garnet all that was said of him, even by his fellows, after he had played his game and lost his life; for the whole body of the secular clergy hated him as an upstart and intruder in their Church, while many of his brethren in the Society, blessed with more patient tempers and more moderate hopes, disliked his memory as that of a man who had brought discredit on their craft. From neither side had Garnet much in the way of mercy to expect; a balance must be struck between the words which were spoken and the facts which were proved.

The Prefect was a fine linguist, a subtle reasoner, a good divine; but no one who knows the story of his time will say that he lived a perfectly blameless life. When a lad at Winchester school, he was flogged for offences which have no name; and the conditions under which he resided as a grown man in Italian cloisters, in Flemish camps, and in English country-houses, were in high degree unfavourable to personal virtue. Most of his days and nights were spent in evading spies, in studying tricks and masks, in passing under false colours, in conducting spurious business. One day he was a rich merchant from the City, next day a poor soldier from the wars; here a married man, there a single one; now a tavern-ruffler, with rapier ready on his thigh; anon a starving curate, full of ardour for his Queen. Each day was to him a fight for liberty and life. The fate of his old companions weighed upon his mind. Southwell had been hung. Weston still lingered in the Clink—a daily warning, that if he meant to live and labour for his Church, he must put on every disguise that natural craft and wide experience could suggest as a cover for what he was. Short of this masking, he would fail at once. Yet while it would be harsh to urge against Garnet that his changes of name and dress were in themselves immoral, as tending to deceive, it would be idle not to see that a life so spent implies a vast deal of lying, and that lying, for whatever purpose it may be done, is utterly corrosive to heart and soul. A saint could not live a daily lie.

That Father Garnet loved good wine and plenty of it, we know from the highest source—himself. Claret was his table-drink, and he liked to wind up his repast with sack. Sometimes he drank so freely that his servants had to put him to bed. Now and then he got drunk. But there is no reason to believe with

Bishop Abbott, that he was a constant sot; the very life he led being evidence against such a calumny. That he was fond of female society, and indulged his weakness to the point of public scandal, there can be no doubt. The ladies living under his roof may have thought themselves the Martha and Mary of a new reign of grace; but the Prefect knew that the world would not judge their conduct in this pious vein. The world condemned them; the Church condemned them. In the writings of the secular priests, this weakness of the Jesuit Prefect was denounced in terms which leave no room for doubt as to what was meant.

The rival and destroyer of Father Garnet was his successor as chief of the Anglo-Spanish Plot in the second phase. This man was Lord Henry Howard, better known as Earl of Northampton, the title which he bore in the reign of James the First.

Northampton was the second son of Lord Surrey, singer of the Songs and Sonnets, lover of the Fair Geraldine. An Italian soothsayer promised the poet that his child would pass through a youth of want and trouble—a manhood of honour—an old age of wealth. The noble Poet may have smiled at such auguries for a son of the ducal house of Howard; but these words of the Italian wizard were called to mind when the poet had fallen beneath the axe and his son was an outcast and a beggar in a foreign land. A dark Greek fate appeared to pursue Northampton's race; his father, the Poet, had perished on the block—his brother, Duke Thomas, the lover of Mary, had perished on the block—his nephew, Philip the Confessor, had died in the Tower. A pauper in the land of his birth, an exile in Italy and France, the future patron of learning was unable to buy a new book, and the designer of Audley End was forced to seek shelter in a barn. Is it strange that miseries which few men could have borne at all, should have unstrung in the Poet's son a mind that was quick and fertile, rather than great and strong?

He had lived in Rome, where his life was gracious, but not pure. In Rome he became a Catholic—a Catholic of Italian rather than of English type. From the Tiber he passed to the Arno, where he studied art in the Pitti Palace and morals in the Piazza dei Signori. In Florence he left behind him that best companion and guide of genius, a loyal and manly heart; for in the court of Cosmo de Medici he learned the art of changing sides with the time, of urging and denying with the same soft speech, of seeming to be all things to all men; a Prelatist in the company of bishops, a Reformer in that of Puritans, a Catholic in that of priests, a Royalist in that of kings. With one lesson learned from the Tower, corrected by a second lesson learned from the Lateran, he lost his faith in creeds, in councils, and in men. Religion, Country, Virtue, were to him but words; words sounding in his ears like the idle wind. Place, Power, and Money, he could understand; and after these things had been won, he could taste the delights of pomp and rank. His taste was fine and his learning wide. He loved to build great mansions, to buy fine pictures, to store up costly jewels, to collect rare books. All these things cost large sums, and money was to him a need, like his daily bread.

Bent on building up once more the fallen house of Howard, he never paused to debate the means. Show him a road that led to place, he took it; show him a road that led to gold, he took it; never stopping to inquire if the path were such as an honest man could take. The brother of a Duke who had lost his title and estates, how could Northampton afford to be an honest man? A little was gained on the coming in of James; he was made Earl of Northampton; his nephew Thomas was made Earl of Suffolk; his grand-nephew, the son of Philip, restored in blood, was created Earl of Arundel and Surrey. But the family was poor, and the ducal coronet of his race was lost.

Northampton, now growing old, and fretted by a foul disease, was still stout in purpose and stanch in brain. No sense of shame ever checked his tongue. If a man could help him to get on, he was willing to serve that man in ways which would have degraded the vilest slave. While Cecil reigned, he pandered to that sly and secret voluptuary by putting in his way the Countess of Suffolk, his lovely and venal niece; just as, some years later, he encouraged her still more beautiful and profligate daughter, Lady Essex, to violate her nuptial vows with Carr.

This hoary sinner, having a keen sense of the value of virtue as an article of trade, kept a large assortment of moralities on sale. No lord of the court could make a finer speech. His maxims were always noble; his words were always chaste. He never sold a niece for money without boasting of his honour, and never hung a priest without protesting his devotion to his Church.

The first part of this Anglo-Spanish conspiracy ended with the executions following on the Powder Plot; the second part, with the executions following on the Powder Poisoning. Garnet, the master-spirit of part the first, was hung in St. Paul's Churchyard; Northampton, the master-spirit of part the second, escaped the penalty of his crimes by dying on the eve of his arrest.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

FACTIONS AT COURT.

WHILE the Queen's ashes were yet warm at Richmond, a schism broke out in her council at Whitehall, not only in words which pass, but in acts which live. A part of her council was for making terms with the King of Scots, now known to be her heir; such terms as their fathers had often made with uncrowned kings; such terms as their sons had afterwards to impose on William the Third. Lord Grey was one of those who urged that James should be asked for pledges to respect our English rights and to follow our English laws. Sir John Fortescue supported the views of Grey, while Cecil and the two Howards (soon to be known as the Earls of Suffolk and Northampton) contended that all such things could wait, that subjects must not make conditions, and that the wisest course would be to trust their king.

Cecil knew too well in what he placed his trust. For three years past he had employed Lord Henry in a secret correspondence with the Scottish court, from which he had learned enough of James to see his drift and gauge his strength. The Scottish prince, he found, was bent on peace; peace with the Austrian Cardinal, peace with the Spanish court; peace on every side and on any terms; even though it might have to be the "King of Hungary's peace." This policy suited Cecil, who felt that in case of war the public power would pass away from clerks and secretaries into the hands of warriors, such as Raleigh, Nottingham, and Grey.

The war party wished to shape the policy of James so as to give him glory abroad and peace at home; a government that should be a living force, a people who should be content and free. The way to these ends, they said, was to raise the siege of Ostend, to drive the Jesuit missionaries out of London, to unite the English people in defence of public liberty and public law. The peace party wished to leave the question of policy to the King; well knowing that he spoke of the Dutch as rebels, that he wished the Cardinal success, and that, in reference to the treaties which bound him to aid his allies, he openly announced his intention not to be tied by the contracts of a woman and a fool.

Thus, in the gardens of Whitehall, on the day of the Queen's death, before the King of Scots was yet proclaimed, two parties were in line; an English party, having an English platform, on which stood Raleigh, Fortescue, and Grey; a Spanish party, having a Spanish platform, on which stood Cecil and his friends. The first party wanted liberty and war, and the cry of their partisans in the streets was, "Down with the Austrian! Ho for the Dutch!" The second party wanted peace and place; they had no public cry, for they had no partisans in the street; but their purpose was to become the "Friends of Spain."

These factions fell into a strife, which raged until the King arrived at the Tower and made known his will. James wanted money and quiet; neither of which he could receive so long as the guns were booming over Dover Straits. Cecil promised him money and quiet in return for place and power; blessings which he persuaded James no other man could give. The King could not know, in that early time, that his Secretary of State would sell his secrets and his services for Spanish gold; and had he known the truth, he might only have chuckled in his sleeve, sworn a coarse oath, and begged some portion of the spoil. Any way, the new King gave his confidence to that smooth and serpentine clerk, so that Cecil, in any war he might have to wage against Grey and Raleigh, would have the crown, the army, and the judges, at his back.

The King came in without terms; in fact, these terms were not made until the times of his son and of his son's son.

People in the Strand and Cheape, who heard that their young Prince was bent on forsaking the Holy War, could not believe it. How, they cried, betray the Dutch! How could we betray them and not ourselves? Was not the war of the Armada burning? Had not Montjoy just smitten the Spaniards at Kinsale? Was not Vere at Ostend? Had we not thousands of troops in the Netherlands? Were not Flushing, Rammekins, and Briel in our power? Were we not bound by treaties? Were we not fighting our enemies on a friendly soil, in lieu of having to fight them on our own?

Such was the view then taken by every one, except the King's friends and those who wished to be thought his friends. So strong and wide was this popular feeling for the Dutch, that James could not help seeing that to recall his troops from Ostend and Flushing might be fatal to his peace, if not perilous to his crown. The change must be wrought out step by step. Ere such a course could be safely taken, the war must have lost its charm for the public mind, and the fighting generals must have been tarnished by some dubious charge. Could Vere be starved out of Ostend? Could Raleigh and Grey be compromised with the partisans of war? The first was easy, the second not so easy. Vere had only to be dropt; his letters to be left unread, his prayers unnoticed, his supplies unsent. A cold intelligence, working in a chamber at Whitehall, could count the very hours of Vere. One day the height of human daring would be reached. Brave hands would faint through famine, stout hearts would fail in force, the city would fall into the Austrian's power, and James could affect a sorrow which he would not feel. But neither Grey nor Raleigh could be ruined by leaving him alone. If Grey was to be got out of Cecil's way he must be lodged in the Tower.

Now Cecil was a perfect master in the art of snaring men into suspicion ; yet he could hardly have succeeded in so short a time in meshing his powerful rivals, had he not been aided in his work by an unexpected group of spies. These spies were the Jesuit missionaries whom Grey and his Puritan friends proposed to harry from the land.

For many years past, a few cautious Jesuits, under their Prefect, Garnet, had been hiding in the country, chiefly in the London suburbs and in the midland shires ; but on the Queen's death becoming known abroad, a larger body came over sea from Flanders and Castile, to aid in promoting the peace with Spain. In crossing the Straits, they knew they were breaking the English law, since no member of their Order could then reside on English soil ; but they reckoned, not without cause, on the Secretary of State being purposely blind to their coming over, since their object was to promote the King's most ardent wish. In Cecil these Jesuits met their match. The men who moved the Order were no strangers to him ; some of them were in his pay, still more of them were in his power. A list of the fathers lay in his desk ; a list giving their true names and their false, with an account of the houses in which they lodged, and of the persons who helped them to come and go. He knew something of Father Fisher, otherwise Percy, otherwise Fairfax, who lived in Sir Everard Digby's house. He was acquainted with Father Oldcorne, the confessor of Mrs.

Abington of Hendlip Hall. Garnet was his neighbour, and might almost be called his chum. Father Creswell wrote to him from Valladolid, Father Persons from Rome. By these and other means he held the threads of their purpose in his grasp, and felt that should the day for a tussle with the Order ever come, he would be strong enough to drag them down.

The fathers were allowed to land and spread themselves through the London suburbs and the country districts; but they were not suffered to come and go unwatched. The Secretary had his agents on the quay of every port and the deck of every ship. The jovial skipper who gave the fathers a passage in his bark, and who seemed to them the pink of good fellows, was his spy. The bland old priest, who welcomed them on shore and gave them such wise counsels, was in his pay. One band of Jesuits came over in the *Golden Lion*, Francis Burnell commander. Fresh from Antwerp, where the Austrian Cardinal and the Spanish Infanta had been proclaimed King and Queen of England, these fathers were hot with zeal, and finding the skipper a man of their own mind, they were free in talk about the King of Scots. They said the King was doomed, and talked of the speedy destruction of all his house. Before they were put on shore, Captain Burnell had reported their words to one of Cecil's spies in Harwich, who sent a copy of their speeches to Whitehall.

The spy who watched the coming and going of these fathers in Harwich was Francis Tilletson, a priest.

A part of Cecil's craft in dealing with political rivals lay in the adroit advantage which he took of the bitter feuds then raging in the ancient Church, so as to gain from each party in that Church the means of crushing the other, when a policy of repression happened to serve his turn. Blood ran so high between sections of the Catholic clergy—between the Secular priests and the Jesuit missionaries—that each was ready to betray the other into his hands. Tilletson was not more eager to denounce the Jesuits in Harwich, than Garnet was to destroy the Seculars in London. Each rejoiced when his rival fell. If Jesuits and Seculars were both opposed in theory to the crown, they opposed it in a different spirit, and sought their ends by a different path. Each had a purpose and a plot; and the purpose dearest to each was to betray his fellow-priest to the law.

From his neighbours of Enfield Chase, Cecil got the clue to a wild, spent plot, in which two members of the Secular priesthood, who had made themselves hateful to the Fathers, were much concerned. The plot had failed, the plotters had dispersed. Some ale had been drunk in Carter Lane; a gang of rufflers called the Damned Crew had been raised; and two or three secret conferences had been held between persons of still higher rank; but the dream was past, and the design would have been shrouded in a spy's report, and laid in the grave of all dead things, had not one of the names which incidentally occurred in the papers been that of Grey.

A Priests' Plot—there was a name to strike the public ear! A charge was wanted against Grey, the Puritan peer, the enemy of Philip, the advocate of war. Now, Grey was said to have given two or three private meetings to Sir Griffin Markham, a notorious Papist, and an agent for the priests. What more could men like Cecil and Northampton ask?

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

LORD GREY OF WILTON.

AMONG the young men of high rank who strove in the later years of Gloriana's reign to make a true religion of their daily lives, to be at once brave soldiers, faithful citizens, and pious sons, to live in the world, yet also live to God—and the roll of these high and noble men was not a short one—the most eminent for his birth, his genius, and his misery, was Thomas Grey, the sixteenth baron of his line, in whom was to expire, in a cell of that Watergate which Henry the Third had built, the last male heir of a house which that same Henry the Third had summoned to his side.

Grey was nursed under a mother's eye. Until he was ten years old he lived at Whaddon Hall in Bucks, the family seat, where he was taught to read the Word of God, as well as to ride and fence, to leap the barriers, and to run the ring. As he grew in size, the playmate of a tiny sister, Bridget, and of a baby-brother, who was taken from him at an early day, his mother Sibyl saw with pride and love that he was growing rich, not only in the arts which adorn high rank, but in that spiritual grace which she prized in her son above all the accomplishments of earth. At ten he was called a man and sent into the world. The Greys had always been men of war, and a Grey of Wilton Castle could have no other home than a camp. His chair was to be a saddle, his coat a corslet, his cap a casque of steel. But Lady Grey was anxious that her boy should be a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ, no less than a stout defender of his Queen; and she lived to see him all that she hoped he would become.

Grey was happy in both his parents. Arthur Grey, his father, that renowned Lord Deputy of Ireland who was the patron of Gascoyne and the friend of Spenser, is known to lovers of great books as Artegal, the Knight of Justice, in the "Faery Queen;" a princely figure, noble as it is spotless; not more true to the poetic art than to the human life.

In court and camp young Grey was ever at his father's side, often in the thickest of bloody fields.

> For Arthur's son
> Held Arthur's spirit.

Once, when he was hardly twelve years old, in a sudden fight, some English horsemen giving way before a swarm of kernes, the Lord Deputy, who had seen the waving line, pricked up, the lad at his heels, and shouting "Grey and his heir for the Queen," dashed in among the foe and cut them through. That Irish camp was a terrible school of arms; for a gang of reckless devils, the sweepings of Italian bagnios and Spanish gaols, had been flung into Connaught, where they had built a fortress, called the Fort del Oro. Roaming through Galway and parts of Kerry, these gangs had ravaged two counties before the Lord Deputy could move against them; but when Artegal leapt to horse, it was to strike a blow that men should not be able to forget. Never since the Lion of Judah went forth to battle had a sterner spirit ruled a camp than he who led the English force against Del Oro. Grey asked no quarter, and he gave none. The fort was taken and the enemy destroyed.

It was in this action under Grey that Raleigh, then a young captain, won his first red laurels in the field.

From this fierce school of war the boy was sent to Oxford. Robert Marston, who wrote a Life of Grey in verse, declares that now

> Arms entered into league with arts,

but the young soldier was too busy with his work to stay over-long at college. Like his father, and like his comrade Raleigh, he vowed his sword to the Good Old Cause; and while he was yet in his teens he crossed into the Low Countries, to finish his education in the trench and field. The Dutch received him with open arms; and in the front of every charge, his countrymen saw with pride the trail of his crimson plume. Grey brought into the patriots' camp, not only a soldier's sword, but a statesman's thought; not only a dauntless eye, but a clear and resolute mind. He knew, not merely how to fight, but how to turn the tide of battle to a righteous end. He saw what should be done, and how it should be done. Nursed on the passions which breathe in the "Faery Queen," the legend of his house, he loathed Grantorto with all his soul, and spurned the Idol as he would have spurned the nether fiend.

Loving his Queen and country as he loved his mother and his sister Bridget, Grey was with the foremost in every enterprise by land and sea. He served against the Irish rebels; he sailed on the Island Voyage; he fought on Nieuport sands.

On his return from camp to court he found the Earl of Essex, his old companion of the Island Voyage, commencing that evil course which was to bring him, in a few mad months, to the Devereux tower and to St. Peter's church. Grey warned his friend, and heard his warning received with gibes. Less vexed than pained by his rebuff, he stood apart in silence, until he saw that Essex was falling away from all his English friends, and taking hold of an Anglo-Spanish crew; giving up Bacon and Raleigh for the pupils of Father Garnet; for men like Monteagle, Father Wright, and Captain Lea. Then he spake to the Earl once more. But all was vain; the Earl having entered on a course from which neither love nor fear could draw him back. Grey told these faithless peers and tavern-plotters to count him in future as a foe.

Lord Southampton, a young fellow like himself, but weak and fitful, heard this warning with open scorn, and put such words on Grey as a soldier could not bear. Grey stopped him and beat him in the public street. This quarrel of the young peers so stirred her court, that the Queen had to send Lord Grey to the Prince of Orange, who was lying in front of Grave, until the storm passed by.

The mettle of the young man having now been proved, he was courted by the chiefs of every side. He joined the party of Raleigh, Nottingham, and Cecil, against the Earl of Essex. He went over to Dublin in command of a regiment of horse to watch the plotters, and when Essex swept back to London, Grey was quickly in his front. When the Earl's folly maddened into crime, the pious young soldier was commissioned by the Queen as her General of the Horse.

Grey's heart was thrown into these courtly broils only so far as they formed a part of that war which his country had to wage against the King of Spain. Not against Essex the courtier, not even against Essex the politician, would he have drawn his sword. The foe whom he smote in the guise of Essex was Grantorto; the Earl, who had fought by his side, having gone over to the enemy, making a companion of Robert Catesby and a counsellor of Father Wright. When the court was purged of factions, Grey turned his eyes once more towards the fields in which his country's battles were being fought on a foreign soil. Most of all, he strained his vision towards Ostend.

For in those last days of the Queen, a roar of guns was booming above the Straits, which spoke to the heart of England as no other crash of earth's artillery could speak. An Austrian Cardinal, married to the Infanta, Clara Isabel, "heiress of France and England," lay with a mighty host before Ostend, the last rampart of the Reformed religion in Flanders, the lines of which were held by a garrison of Dutch and English troops, commanded by Sir Francis Vere.

Lying low in the sands, behind a wall of mud with narrow streets, stone houses, and a place of arms, Ostend was a fishing port and village of barely three thousand souls. The town itself was nothing; but this speck of coast was strong in the dykes and sandhills, in the line of sea, and in the thews of a gallant race. The folk were Protestant, eager to be free; and the people, both in London and the Hague, were conscious that the battle of their freedom was being fought, and might haply be decided, in the trenches of Ostend.

The strength of Spain was planted before this village in the sands, and month after month went by without giving her the prize. Assaults were made with a vigour which has rarely been seen in war, and never except in a religious war. Yet the town stood out. A rash vow, made by the Infanta, had been kept by her, but kept in a fashion to become the bye-word of every land. Looking over the low roofs and simple works, Clara Isabel, on the day of her arrival, swore by her saints that she would enter the place before she changed her chemise; and that chemise had grown from white to yellow, and from yellow to black, yet Isabel had not entered into the place yet. The Cardinal Archduke's lines were daily creeping closer to the town, and at length a front of batteries built along the coast swept all the outlets to the sea, and cut off succours from the Dutch and English fleets. One day, a whisper ran through the galleries at Whitehall that the port of Ostend was closed, and that news from the beleaguered city must be got by roundabout and unsafe roads.

In this stress of evil, Grey undertook to force the passage with a single ship, and show the troopers in Ostend that they were not cut off. The ship was found and the passage forced. A hundred cannon from the sand-hills opened on his flag, but Grey shot into port, unscathed by the Austrian fire, and landing in the town, amidst the shouts and thanks of the besieged, he brought to the brave defenders not only much needful succour, but the congratulations of his country and his Queen.

Grey was not simply a man of war. Like his father, he was a friend of poets; like his mother, he was a friend of preachers. In his religious views he was a pupil of Reynolds and Cartwright, and the strong party of the Puritans looked upon him as a chief. Yet Grey was the reverse of a bigot. Law and policy were as much his study as divinity and soldiership, and he is known to have held some views on the civil power going far beyond the science of his age. Young, noble, rich, illustrious, what gifts might not fortune be supposed to hold in store for such a man?

Some people thought the highest state of all was not too high for one so gifted and so good. Shrewd wits were heard to guess that Grey would wed the Lady Arabella Stuart; in which case he might be called, in his partner's right, to ascend Elizabeth's throne.

No one who watched the young General of Her Majesty's horse prancing past Charing Cross, in the closing months of her reign, could have dreamt that his course was already run; that one short year would find him a prisoner in the Tower; that a flagitious charge, a splendid defence, a theatrical reprieve, a lingering imprisonment, and an early death, were all that remained on earth to that dashing peer, the heir of so many glories, the object of so much love.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OLD ENGLISH CATHOLICS.

THE plot in which Cecil was to entangle Grey was not a conspiracy of worldly and wicked men so much as a fantastic dream on the part of two dull and excited priests.

To see how this plot arose, to understand why the Jesuits betrayed it, and to follow the chain which binds it to the Powder Plot, one should recall to mind the exact relation in which the two chief sections of the Catholic clergy stood towards each other in the opening years of James the First. A few words will suffice.

When the great Queen had come to her crown, one body, and only one body, calling themselves Catholic, existed in her realm. During her reign a second body, calling themselves Catholic, sprang into life. The first were the English Catholics, the second were the Roman Catholics; and in the opening year of James's reign these two sections stood, not simply apart, but in hostile array.

To the first party belonged the thousands on thousands of families in every shire who had clung, through good and evil, to the ancient rite. These families clung to that rite because it was old and venerable, because it was the rite of their fathers, because it was woven into the texture of their social and moral life. These people never thought of their Church as a thing apart from their country. How could they have done so? The English Church was just as old as the English name. Their sires had been members of a free Church; and they could boast, with cause, that in all their efforts after freedom, that Church had borne her part. "The English Church shall be free," was the very first clause set down in the charter won from John. To tell these English families that their creed was a foreign creed, to be kept by them for the benefit of a foreign priest and a foreign king, was to speak to them in an unknown tongue. They reverenced Rome, as the oldest of Latin sees; but they thought of her as a sister, not as a mistress; and while they gave to Pope Clement the highest honour, they denied his right to meddle in their courts of law. Submitting to his will in spiritual things, they refused his briefs and declined his authority in worldly things. Even as to Church order, they had ways of their own which were not as the Roman ways. They had their own feasts and vigils, their own policy and method, which an Italian could hardly understand and in which he could have no share. Their country was what Rome had once proudly called her, an island of the saints. In one word, the old English Church was to these staunch Catholics a national Church.

To the second party belonged the new men, few in number and fierce in spirit, who had been drawn away by Jesuits from the reformed English Church. They were converts; converts of a recent date and a malignant type; accused of having gone over to the enemy, less from religious heat, than from political passion, and even from family pique. The times were apt to such desertions from the Church. Apostasy was a protest; a form of going into what is now called "opposition." When a man failed at court, like Philip Howard, the ready way to insult his sovereign was to change his creed. When a man quarrelled with his father, like William Parker, the surest way to worry that father was to send for a priest. When a man wasted his fortune, like Thomas Percy, the quickest way to escape reproaches from his friends was to be seen attending mass. From Robert Catesby down to Thomas Winter, the motive for desertion seems in almost every case to have been either personal or political discontent.

Each of these parties had their own priests; the first party being led by the Secular clergy, the second party by the Jesuits.

The old English priests were for the most part learned, tolerant, timid men, who gave their thoughts to spiritual things, and wished to leave politics to kings and queens. Their duty lay in the care of souls. Their hope was to live in peace, to say their office, to watch their flocks, and leave the results of their patient toil in the hands of God. When the law left them alone—and on the whole they were wisely left alone—they were content. Striving to do good, in the belief that what they taught and wrought were best for their country, they paid scant heed to what was considered the best for Spain.

On the other side, the Jesuits were men of the world, with worldly purposes in view. They were the servants of Philip, whom he had sent into England to do his work. That prince, having received them into Spain; having given them money and power; having placed the colleges of Seville and Castile in their hands; having espoused their quarrels in Flanders and in Rome, had led them to see that his glory would be their glory, and that in him they would find not only a powerful master but an indulgent friend.

The old Catholics, a slow and sober folk, who tried to keep their fingers out of fire, esteemed it no less a sin to kill a king than to kill a pope. The new Catholics, hot in blood and bold of speech, contended that a good cause might justify foul deeds; and that the highest cause on earth was that which they professed—the cause of a single empire and a single Church.

No outward sign, no inward motive, separated the English Catholics from their neighbours of the countryside. In all invasions, and in all threatened invasions, they were prompt to march. Loving their native land as other men loved it, they were stung to frenzy by reports that a foreigner meant to profane their soil; and moving into line with the first, they struck the foe, not caring to inquire under what flag he fought. The best of the old Catholic peers and gentry were out in the Armada year.

The new Catholics were strangers in the land. While Lord Montagu, born a Catholic, was riding down to Tilbury Fort, with his son, his grandson, and his tenants in his wake, all armed to defend their country, Lord Arundel, the son of a Protestant duke, was saying clandestine mass and uttering a traitor's prayer in the Beauchamp tower. English but in name, the Jesuits had taught their lay disciples to accept a foreign purpose and a foreign prince. Spain was to be their country, and they were to seek her glory in a way from which their neighbours would be likely to recoil, not only with aversion, but with scorn. They were to consider their native land as lost to God, their neighbours as the heirs of everlasting death. They were to treat their prince as an outlaw, and to hold his judges as accursed of Heaven. The converts were not suffered to feel proud of their English birth, but rather to bow their heads into the dust for shame. They were to have no part in the common weal. "I am become a stranger to my brethren," cried their oracle, Father Persons, "an alien to the sons of my mother." Spain was to be their only country, Philip their only king.

These two bodies were of unequal force.

The English Catholics were half the population, if they were not more. One-third of the peers, one-half the country gentlemen, two-thirds of the hedgers and ditchers, were Catholic. A change of faith is not to be made in a year, not in a hundred years; in England the change had been a work of time, and the work was still going on. Among the county magistrates every second man was still a Catholic. The Reformed religion had its seat in the great towns; but even in these great towns the opposite opinions were held in strength.

The Roman Catholics were few in number and scattered through distant shires. It is doubtful whether the Jesuits could at any time have rallied a thousand voices to support them against the ancient clergy of their Church. The secret of the influence wielded by Garnet and his helpers lay in the wonder and fear inspired by the great Order to which they belonged.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ENGLISH JESUITS.

THE form in which the English branch of the Society of Jesus presented itself to a statesman's notice was that of an Anglo-Spanish plot, whether he judged them by their personal bearing or by their public acts.

In all countries, the members of this Order mixed with the world, which they affected to despise, and studied how to rule. They were great in colleges, greater still in courts. They made tools of women, and dupes of men who were the slaves of women. They affected to know strange secrets, to possess indefinite funds, to govern by inscrutable means. They could change their names, their costumes, their nationalities, at will. A priest could wear a beard, a monk could deny his shaven crown. They could put on plain stuff, they could sparkle in satin and gold. In making war on the powers of darkness, they had a right to seize all weapons of war, to employ all arts of deception. Doing Heaven's will on earth, they were free from all scruples which might impede their work.

But what was dubious in the conduct of Jesuits in other lands was carried to the farthest reach by the English branch. Claudius Aquaviva had no disciples so unruly as his English pupils. All Jesuits were inclined by habit to subject the interests of religion to those of politics; the English brethren made that subjection unconditional and complete. As men of the world, they took the extremest views of what is permitted, classing conspiracy with love and war, in which everything is said to be fair. They justified treachery—they justified rebellion—they justified public murder. In the schools which their patron, Philip of Spain, had caused to be placed under their control, they bound their pupils by an oath to go back when their course was finished to their native land, and strive by fair means and by foul to win it for the Church of Rome and the King of Spain. Inured to danger, these pupils of the Jesuits crossed the sea—prepared in mind for trouble, and wearing in their fancies the martyr's crown. But they were taught to make the best of a good cause, and not to throw away their lives. Provided with masks and money, served by their own agents, fed by their own converts, they were able to preach and teach with but little risk. They had means for landing in the ports, for evading spies, for slipping through the nets of justice. Living in what they called "a strange land," they mapped off the country in shires and hundreds, and on these small charts they marked each lonely beach on which a boat was kept, each country-house in which they had a secret room. A Jesuit's business being to go about the world unseen, he had a dozen garbs, a dozen professions, and a dozen names. He had the jargon of many arts and the patter of many tongues. A confessor of women, he learned from them the secrets which he turned against their lords, and through these secrets he could sometimes reach at persons whom he dared not openly address.

This permanent conspiracy on the English soil in favour of a foreign prince was offensive not only to the old Catholics, who wished to live in peace, but to politicians like Cecil and Northampton, who meant to become the chiefs of a new Spanish party in the state.

For the moment, these politicians were willing to use the Jesuits; but, even while using them, they hoped to compromise and destroy them as a political power.

The Jesuits had not been twenty-three years in London; Persons, the first English Prefect, had not been thirty years a Jesuit; so that the men whom they had trained to act in this foreign spirit were none of them yet beyond middle age. Robert Persons and Edmund Campion had come over sea in 1580; come over against the wishes of the English Catholics; since they came in defiance of the law, and meaning to be a cause of strife; "creating disturbances," as Persons had frankly said, "in places where everything till that time was tranquil." Being then at peace, the Catholics wished to remain at peace; but this smooth state of things, if good for the clergy and their flocks, had been the reverse of good for Philip, who would gladly have seen the Catholics driven mad with misery, in order that his generals might count on finding a partisan under every roof. The Prefect had come over with two sets of instructions, one of which he had kept in reserve. He was to stir up lawless passions, so as to sting the civil power into a severer course; and he was to put down the native fasts, and substitute those of the Italian Church.

When Persons returned to Rome, leaving Father Weston with the rank of Prefect, he could boast of having made converts of Sir Thomas Tresham of Rushton Hall, Sir William Catesby of Lapworth, and their sons Francis and Robert, then boys of a tender age. Campion, who stayed behind to carry on his work, wrote a letter to the Privy Council, in which he said:—" . . . Be it known to you that we have made a league; all the Jesuits in the world, whose succession and multitude must overreach the practices of England; for bearing the curse that you shall lay upon us; and never to despair of your recovery while we have a man left to enjoy your Tyburns, or to be racked by your torments, or to be consumed within your prisons. Expenses are reckoned; the enterprise is begun. It is of God; it cannot be resisted; so the faith was founded; so it must be restored." This challenge was answered by a stricter law. Father Weston was locked in the Clink Prison, in spite of Lady Arundel's tears and gold; and the luckless Jesuit who defied his country was flung into the Tower, convicted of high treason, and put to death.

Robert Southwell and Henry Garnet were sent from Rome by Persons to fill the dangerous posts. Southwell took up Weston's place in Lady Arundel's household, while Garnet became Prefect of the English mission. Even the poet showed that in his foreign schools he had lost the human and tender sense of home. "We have sung the Canticles in a strange land," he wrote; and that "strange land" was the country of his birth! In due time he followed Campion to the Tower, and after three years of waiting, was tried and hung; leaving his more cautious and unscrupulous friend, the new Prefect, to continue and complete his task.

Philip found no trustier servants than these English priests, who spread themselves not only over England, but over Europe, in order to do his will. They stood by the side of kings, and the ministers and mistresses of kings. Robert Persons was near the Pope; Joseph Cresswell was in Madrid, the Spanish capital; Henry Fludd in Lisbon, then the principal Spanish port. William Baldwin followed Spinola's banner on the Rhine. John Jones lived at Douai. Hugh Owen, the most active and most unscrupulous of these fathers, was in the Cardinal's camp. One of Father Owen's closest friends was Sir William Stanley; one of his nearest followers was Guy Fawkes.

A crime of the rarest kind and the darkest dye had covered the name of Sir William Stanley with an odium which has hardly any mate. This knight had given up the city of Deventer to the enemy, while commanding an English and native garrison in his sovereign's name. The Jesuits owned his work, praising him for doing what he felt to be right, in face of the adverse verdicts of the world. A medal, commemorative of his treason, was struck in Rome. The rage and shame with which the news of this treachery was received in England cannot be expressed in words. Men said it was the Jesuits' doing; and when they afterwards spoke of Jesuit morals, they mentioned the betrayal of Deventer as one of those facts from which there is no appeal.

A soldier hated and reviled as Stanley was drew all the desperate spirits who left their country to his side, and a regiment of English renegades was formed by him in the Cardinal's camp, which he fondly hoped to have a chance of one day leading against his Queen.

Garnet fixed his quarters near London, so as to be within easy reach of his lay supporters, and able to direct the many coadjutors who came over from Spain and Flanders to help in putting England beneath the yoke.

The chief of these helpers were Father Fisher, Father Gerard, and Father Greenway, whom he sent into the midland shires, with orders to attach themselves to ardent women and discontented men. They were to treat the country as a missionary land, to regard their Church as a missionary Church. England being lost to the faith of Christ, their business was to convert it back; that portion of it which claimed to be Catholic no less than that which avowed itself Reformed. All were gone astray from Rome, they said, and all must be brought into the fold, out of which there was no salvation from death and hell.

The headquarters of this conspiracy were planted in Enfield Chase.

CHAPTER XL.

WHITE WEBBS.

ON the edge of Enfield Chase, about ten miles from Paul's Cross, stood—in the days of James the First—a large and lonely house of the Tudor sort; a house in a narrow lane, so screened by trees that a few paces off it could be hardly seen. It had many rooms, a big garden, and a high fence. The place was a maze of ins and outs; with passages by which visitors might come and go; with traps in the oaken floors and secret chambers in the chimney stacks and the dividing walls. Deep vaults lay below, while a conduit led to the dams and waters of the Lea. This house was called White Webbs, and from its situation and its size it might have been built as a hiding-place for priests and a rendezvous for plots.

Like the whole of Enfield Chase, White Webbs belonged to the Crown. Some thirty years before that time the Queen had granted it to Robert Hewick, her Physician in Ordinary; and this Robert Hewick had afterwards let it to Rowland Watson, Clerk of the Crown, whose wife still held it on a lease.

One day—about the time when Essex was beginning to court the foreign Catholics, to consort with Catesby and Tresham, to consult with Father Wright—a man of middle age, thick set, with rather jovial manner, came to see the place. He gave the name of Mese, the address of Berks. He wore a coat of fustian stuff, and looked like a grazier of the better class. He had a sister, he said, one Mrs. Perkins, a lady of good means, who wanted to hire a house near London, where she could live in quiet, yet see her friends from town. The Queen's Physician saw no reason to suspect his guest, and when the terms were settled between them, Mr. Mese became the tenant of White Webbs.

Robert Skinner, who passed for Mrs. Perkins' butler, took possession and prepared the rooms; putting James Johnson, a servant whom he hired, in charge of this house, while he rode over to Enfield and engaged one Lewis, a carrier, to go with his team to London and fetch in goods. One room was set apart as a chapel; all the things necessary in performing mass were bought; and the chambers were furnished with books and relics as well as with household stuff.

Three months elapsed before Mrs. Perkins came. She was a lady in the prime of life, and seemingly of ample means. Skinner and his wife waited on her; but she had other servants, both male and female, in her train; including Will Shepherd, her coachman, and Bess, that coachman's wife. In fact, the lady's establishment was framed on a large and costly scale.

She was a Catholic, and her people were also Catholic.

Mr. Mese, of Berkshire, followed his sister to White Webbs, and when he came, he brought his man-servant, a cunning fellow, who was known as Little John. By and by, a Mr. Perkins came to White Webbs; a lean man, with a long face, brown hair, and yellow beard. He had a serving-man with him, called George, whose full name was George Chambers. In what relation Mr. Perkins stood to Mrs. Perkins no one seemed to know. Skinner could have told, no doubt, but Skinner never spoke. He might be taken for her husband, since he came to her very often and stayed with her very long. In fact, although he went away on business from time to time, he never failed to come back to White Webbs as to his proper home. Mr. Mese also spent much of his time in the Chase; many gentlemen riding down from London to see him, some of whom sat up late at night talking business in his room. These strangers put up their horses, had beds prepared for them, and sometimes stayed in the house for two or three days; on which occasions much venison would be sent for and much claret drank.

Once when Mr. Mese went away from White Webbs on business, he came back in a new name. He was now called Mr. Farmer, and the servants were told to speak of him as such. Shortly afterwards, these servants heard him addressed by some of his friends as Father Walley; and then they knew, if they had not previously suspected, that the homely personage in the fustian coat was a priest. James Johnson, the hired domestic, kept his eyes and ears open; and after a little waiting he found reason to believe that his mistress was not what she seemed; was not named Perkins, was neither wife nor widow, but a single woman, the daughter of a peer. But James was clever enough to keep his secret and his place.

In no long time a second lady came to White Webbs, and took up her abode there. She gave the name of Mrs. Jennings, and the people about the house were told that her husband was a merchant of the City, a good deal away from home. Mrs. Jennings was said to be a sister of "Mrs. Perkins," in which case she would be a sister of "Mr. Mese." That a warm affection bound the lady and gentleman to each other, any one might see. Now and then, a small creature, with a red beard and a bald pate, made his appearance at White Webbs, who called himself Thomas Jennings, and claimed Mr. Mese's sister as his wife.

None of these people were what they seemed. The homely man in fustian stuff was Father Garnet, Prefect of the English mission. The serving-man called Little John, was Nick Owen, a lay Jesuit, of singular skill in devising places for concealment. "Mr. Perkins," was Father Oldcorne; and his serving-man, George, was also a lay Jesuit, in attendance on his chief. The two ladies, passing under the names of Mrs. Perkins and Mrs. Jennings, were Ann and Helen, daughters of William, third Lord Vaux of Harrowden. Ann was a single woman, Helen a wedded wife. "Mrs. Perkins" had no other relation to "Mr. Perkins" than that of a penitent to her priest. No ties of blood connected the ladies with "Mr. Mese." Helen was not Mrs. Jennings; nor was the small creature who called himself Jennings a merchant from the City. The bald pate belonged to Bartholomew Brooksby, a country gentleman of good estate and of little wit, who had given himself body and soul to work out the Prefect's will. He was allowed to pay most of the rent for White Webbs.

Lord Vaux, the father of these two ladies, had been a grievous sufferer for conscience-sake. No small part of his life had been spent in jails, and no small part of his fortune had been lost in fines. For more than two years he had lodged in the Fleet prison, in company with Sir Thomas Tresham, whose sister he married on his first wife's death. He had seen his family broken up, and the honours of his line renounced. For his eldest son, Henry Vaux, had been persuaded by the Jesuits to lay down his name and title, to assume the higher mission of the cross. This heir to a noble name and good estate had thrown away all his worldly advantages to enter a foreign cell and to die a monk. Nor was this all that he had to bear. His second son, George Vaux, now heir to his honours, had almost broken his heart by marrying against his wish, and family strife had embittered his later days. Lord Vaux outlived his sons—he quarrelled with his connections—and, when he died, he left the honours of his house to a child not seven years old, the son of a woman whom he could not bear. Ann Vaux and Helen Brooksby were the aunts to this young peer.

White Webbs was called a seraglio; a child was born there, Helen Brooksby's child; and when Sir Edward Coke got the papers into his hands, he made coarse allusion to the paternity of this child. Garnet confessed that he was the christener; Coke demanded to be told whether he was not the father. The baby was said to have a bald head; Coke requested to know whether it had not a "shaven crown." From these impertinences it is easier to defend the Prefect than from the accusations of Father Floyd. Griffith Floyd, a Jesuit agent, was sent to England by his superiors to inquire into the life which Garnet had been leading at White Webbs, especially as to his love of dainty food, and his alleged familiarities with Mistress Ann. He told his masters that he had "found too much." The words are somewhat vague; they were meant to damage Garnet; but we must not follow them from what they describe to what they merely hint. No proof exists of an immoral intimacy. If Garnet felt a love for either Ann Vaux or Helen Brooksby beyond what is allowed to a priest for every soul committed to his care, he never put that love into written words. But while he may be acquitted of criminal passion for his fair penitents, he must be held responsible for all the scandals piled upon their names. He led them into a false position, and he kept them in that false position before the world. They were not nuns. They had taken no vows. They lay under no female rule. One of them was a married woman. In living under the same roof with two single men, in passing under false names, in pretending to a near relationship of blood, and in assuming a condition to which they had no right, they laid themselves open to jests and sneers from which they ought to have been saved by more prudent friends. Garnet had not the grace to act a more manly part. He loved the soft ways of these high-born women, and rather than forego the pleasure of their company he was willing to darken and blight their fame.

To this lonely house in the royal demesne came other Jesuits besides Oldcorne, other laymen besides Bartholomew Brooksby. Father Fisher, Father Gerard, and Father Greenway were often there, coming in a score of varying names and garbs. Besides the lay characters which they assumed, each Jesuit had three or four priestly names, so as to be known to the servants of different houses as different persons. Fisher was called Father Percy in one place, Father Fairfax in a second. Gerard was known as Father Standish, Father Brooke, and Father Lee; Greenway as Father Greenwell and Father Tesmond. All these emissaries moved about the country, passing from house to house, saying mass in secret, raking up the fires of discontent, and keeping alive in their scholars the prospect of a change.

Lay visitors came to the lonely house.

After the death of Essex on Tower Hill, the men who were out with him in the streets, and were afterwards pardoned by the Queen, came over to consult the Jesuits as to what should be done. The first of these lay visitors were Robert Catesby and a companion whom he called Tom. Catesby was a young gentleman; tall, handsome, well bred, with a presence which took the eye; his blood being gentle, and his bearing that of a prince. Early converted from his Church, early united to a Protestant wife, early left a widower with an infant son, early engaged in treason to his Queen, he had passed through many lives, and was a worn-out sage before he was thirty years old. The companion whom he called Tom, and who addressed him in reply as Sir, was a dumpy little fellow of middle age, with person and manner exceedingly unlike those of his handsome friend. They asked for Mr. Mese.

The dumpy fellow had just come back from Rome, to which city he had been sent by the Fathers on a secret errand; and having conversed with Persons at the English college, he could explain to the company at White Webbs the latest views of the political exiles at the Roman court.

Other visitors came; not in crowds, but in twos and threes, so as to pass unnoticed in the Chase. Catesby was strict in his own coming and going; riding out either alone, or with his dumpy friend. As a rule, the callers gave no names; they wanted Mr. Mese; and they were shown by Skinner into Mr. Mese's room.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE PRIESTS' PLOT.

THE men of his own Church whom Garnet, as chief of the Anglo-Spanish party, had most cause to fear, were two priests, William Watson and William Clarke, who were loud supporters of the old Catholic party against the new, writers of books on the Jesuits, and warm denouncers of the foreign school.

Having taught their flocks the duty of defending the soil, the freedom, and the sovereign of their native land, these priests were scouted by Father Persons as pedants and fools. To this attack Father Watson replied in a book called "Ten Quodlibetical Questions," from which title he got the droll nick-name of "Quodlibets," by which he has ever since been known. Of a good family, holding high office in the Church and State—a kinsman of that Thomas Watson who was Queen Mary's Bishop of Lincoln—he regarded the new ideas preached by Persons and Garnet with the contempt of a Catholic of ancient lineage and unswerving faith. How, he asked himself, could these converts understand his Church? What had they done save vex the people and alarm the Government? Loathing their creed, he felt no pity for the fate of Campion and Southwell; and he told the Catholics of Europe, in many a stinging phrase, that the Jesuits who were hung in London, suffered, not because they were servants of their Church, but because they were traitors to their Queen. This view was the English view. In that luscious and ornate style which the clergy learned from the poets, Father Watson denounced the ambition of King Garnet and the turbulence of Emperor Persons, asserting that the angel faces, the flower of England's youth, the beauty of Britain's ocean, should never be appalled, nor the vermilion blush of English virgins, the modesty of married wives, and the matronhood of widows put to shame either by Spanish plots or Spanish force. Persons replied to the secular priest in his "Manifestation," a book disfigured by much bad English and much fierce invective, in which the Jesuit, in place of covering the nakedness of his fellow-priests, accused them of living in a state of drunkenness and uncleanness; nay, he went so far in vituperation as to charge some of these reverend fathers with dicing, and others with stealing pewter pots.

Father Clarke, a man of higher gifts than Watson, answered this "Manifestation" in a "Reply" of some reach and vigour, charging home upon the Jesuits, whom he accused of a design to overthrow all liberty of thought and action, even that of the Pope himself. It would have been well for the old Catholic clergy if Father Clarke had been content with this victory of the pen, but, unfortunately for many besides himself, he conceived the idea of proving to Pope Clement that the old English clergy were a match for these vaunting Jesuits in political craft, no less than they were in literary power.

His friend Watson, one of the few priests of their party who had talked with James while he was yet in Scotland, pledged his word that Catholics would be favoured by the King. For saying so much in public, he was seized by Bancroft, Bishop of London; though the prelate changed his mind and set his prisoner free. When James came in, and day after day went by, and gave no sign, the priest began to think he had been duped. On his asking for a fresh audience, the King replied, "Since all the Protestants are for me, I have no need for the Papists." Father Watson thought the King mistaken in that view, the Catholic hosts being like the summer stars for multitude; and he said the King must be made aware of a fact which he did not seem to know.

Taking Father Clarke into his councils, he found they were of one mind as to the policy of proving, by an open effort, how strong the Catholics were. Two advantages would grow out of such a course:—(1) the King would be frightened into doing right; and (2) the Jesuits, who fancied themselves the only plotters in the world, would be put to open shame. The second of these results would seem to have been regarded by the priests as much more precious than the first.

They meant the King no harm, except a little fright, and their project was to be carried out in the blaze of noon. A Catholic host was to be raised in London and the nearer shires; they were to ride good horses, to show their quality; they were to go forth and meet their King. They were to break upon him like an army in line of battle, to offer their petition of grievances, and, in a frenzy of loyal ardour, to sweep him to the Tower. Surrounded in his palace by a court of Catholic peers, he would be only too willing to dismiss his Secretary, to dissolve his Council, to call new men into office, and openly return to the Church in which he had been baptized. The English Catholics would form his guard, while the Jesuits would be routed from the country as the enemies of God and man.

Such was the dream of these simple priests. But when they came to talk with their sober and conservative flock, they found that such a display of numbers could not be made. Here and there some reckless spirit might be tempted by the hope of plunder to join their ranks, but the busy farmers and fearful citizens were averse to public action of any sort. They wanted to live in peace. They saw no reason to believe the King was with them. They had much to lose by plots, and were slavishly devoted to the maintenance of public law. Not yet reading the moral of their failure, the two priests turned elsewhere for aid, and in these new walks their feet began to slide.

Dining with Duke Humphrey in St. Paul's, rousing in the taverns of Carter Lane, were hosts of stout fellows, who might be willing to mount a good horse on the chance of getting a fat purse, not to speak of such tempting baits as a place at court. One such fellow was Sir Griffin Markham of Beskwood Park, a knight who had smelt powder in the Low Country camps, but having lost his commission, was now dawdling away his time between the confessional, the tavern, and the stews. For the moment he was much excited against Lord Rutland, the young kinsman of Essex, from whom he had suffered some slight; and Father Watson, finding him in a sullen mood, suggested that the nearest way to his revenge upon that proud young spark was through the chances offered by this plot. Markham snapped at the golden bait; but this broken hero bargained for substantial favour; and before he pledged his sword to Watson he stipulated that, on a Catholic ministry being formed by the King, *he* was to have the Secretary's place!

The next fellow to be gained was Anthony Copley, a kinsman of Southwell. At fifteen years of age Copley had left England for Rome, where he accepted a bed and platter in the Jesuits' college, with a pension of ten crowns a year from the Pope. From Rome he passed into Flanders, where Father Owen obtained for him a pension of twenty crowns from the Prince of Parma, in whose service he remained, fighting against his Queen, until he sickened of the Jesuits, when he returned to London and procured a pardon from Burghley on expressing his eagerness for instruction in a better creed. From that time he had been much abused by Persons, though he had never ceased to be a member of his Church. Hating the men at White Webbs, Copley came into Watson's plans, on the simple promise that those Jesuit intriguers were to be put to open shame.

In his first confession Copley boasted that those Jesuits were kept in ignorance of his plot; Watson thought the same; but this impression was a great mistake. A dozen members had not been told of their purpose, before Garnet, jealous and amused, had placed an agent at their board to learn their object and betray them to the law. That agent was Brooksby, whom Garnet set to watch the priests, while his wife Helen remained in her false name and false character beneath the Jesuit's roof.

The parts in this comedy of intrigue being cast, the comedians met in a tavern behind Paul's Churchyard, to wrangle, over pots of ale, about the strength of parties in the court. High names were mentioned in these pot-house meetings; the names of Raleigh, Nottingham, Windsor; but no one spoke of intercourse with these great persons, since no one in the room pretended to know them, except by sight. The scheme for a great display of Catholic strength not only failed, but failed at once; for not a single lay Catholic of name and weight could be induced to join.

The comedy was played out, when Father Watson one day met in the street George Brooke, a man of birth, a brother of Lord Cobham, a brother-in-law of Cecil, having friends among those Puritan and patriotic gentry who were anxious to relieve Ostend. Brooke knew Lord Grey. A disappointed man, ill-used by Cecil, Brooke lay open to the tempter's voice; and as he listened to Father Watson's talk, he fancied that he saw some chance of crossing Cecil by this plan of waylaying and frightening James, if only Grey and some others could be got to help. Father Watson begged him to see what could be done.

Calling at Grey's house, on the pretence of mourning with him over the ruin of God's cause in London as well as on the Flemish coast, Brooke hinted that James had been deceived by Cecil as to the facts of public opinion, and asked whether it might not be well for some gentlemen of birth to lay a humble statement of the case before the King? Grey thought it would be well. James was at Greenwich. Such a statement, Brooke suggested, might be offered to the King as he rode from that place to Windsor Castle; but offered to him openly, in the light of noon, so that all the world might see how many gentlemen of rank and fortune held their views. For such a purpose, Grey said he could muster a hundred gentlemen of the best blood in England in a single day. Secure so far, Brooke asked whether Grey saw any objection to the old Catholic gentry, who had fought with them a common battle against the Jesuits, offering a petition of their own? Grey saw none.

A few days later, Brooke called on Grey again, bringing with him Markham, as one of those Catholic gentlemen who wished to have their grievances made known. These men had other plans, which they could not explain to Grey. They hoped to change the Government; in order to change the Government they must seize the King; and they could only seize the King by fighting with his guard. Alone, they could not venture on such a fight. Could Grey and his friends be tempted into offering them the chances of a fray? If swords were drawn, no man could tell where the broil might end. In a sudden tumult, every one would strike for himself, and on a cry being raised of "To the Tower!" the whole body of riders might be swept along, in a panic of fear, under the guidance of a few strong spirits who knew their minds. Could Grey be tempted?

Brooke, who seemed as though he had only come for instructions, asked the young general what must be done in case the King's guard set on them? Grey only smiled; the guard was not likely to attack a body of gentlemen in holiday attire. Still, urged Brooke, they might draw their swords in error and in panic. Suppose they drew; must the gentlemen stand on their defence? "No," answered Grey at once; under no alarm could he suffer his friends to draw on the royal escort.

Such an answer left the dreamers without a hope; but Watson, falling deeper into treason every hour, thought otherwise. He saw his way and felt his ground. If Grey would raise his friends and meet the King, that fact should be enough. A new plan could be built upon the old; for the priest could now speak to his loyal and conservative flock in a voice which they would understand.

Fired with his new purpose, he ran to the house of Sir Edward Parham, a strict old Somersetshire Catholic, whose sword was keen as his wit was dull. "Quodlibets" told this gentleman, as a secret, that the new King was more than half converted to their faith; that many of his councillors heard mass, and that Pope Clement enjoined his children to guard their prince. Guard him from what? Then Watson whispered in his ear the still more perilous secret that Lord Grey and a gang of Puritan wretches were about to waylay their King, to seize his royal person, and to separate him from the devoted servants of his Church. Out of pure affection he offered to Parham a golden chance. If he could silently and swiftly raise his Catholic friends—who would promptly arm in such a cause—he might be able to win such favour and fortune as Ramsay had won in Gowrie House; for when those Puritan rascals pricked up in the Surrey lane, he could rush upon them, rescue his prince from danger, and carry him to his palace in the Tower.

All that being promptly done, they could then fall at his Majesty's feet and ask him to do them religious justice. What grace could the King refuse to men who had saved his life?

Parham, burning to become a hero of the court like Ramsay, pledged his help. Yet the plot was hardly now complete. To give Parham his cue there must be some appearance of attack. How could a scuffle be brought about? Could Grey be induced to admit Markham, Copley, and a few other Catholics in his train? If so, all would be well; for a kick of Copley's horse might raise a dust, a snap of Markham's pistol might raise a cry; the King would be sure to faint, the guards would probably charge, and the Puritan gentry might be trusted to draw their swords. Then, and then only, would be Parham's time.

Markham went down with Brooke to Lord Grey's house; but Grey would not listen to his prayer. If the Catholics wished to speak, let them do so, he said, another time, in another place. Sir Griffin hinted that the Catholic gentlemen might go to meet the King, whether Grey approved their course or not. In that case, Grey announced that he should not go at all. The conference then broke up; and seeing that for the present no good was to be done at court, Grey crossed the sea to Sluys, in the hope of either finding his way into Ostend or doing some better service to the Dutch.

This departure of Grey from London killed the comedy and brought the curtain down. James rode in peace from Greenwich to Windsor Castle; and then the Jesuits, after hearing a full report from Brooksby of what had been said and done by the plotters, sent Father Barneby, a creature whom they made their tool, to the house of Richard Bancroft, Bishop of London, to denounce the plot and to say where Copley might be seized.

CHAPTER XLII.

WILTON COURT.

A PLOT in the air—a dream in the cloister—a comedy in the tap-room—a scheme which, dying in the throes of birth, could have no public history, was no bad stuff for men like Cecil and Northampton to recast and shape. The secrecy and folly were in their favour. Grey had been consulted; and among the names which had been bandied about in Carter Lane was that of Raleigh. Striking for place and power, the subtle minister and his hoary pander had many motives, personal and political, for pushing their advantage to the last. White Webbs would laugh at the trouble of Watson and Clarke; the English College in Rome rejoice over the ruin of Copley; the Cardinal Archduke give thanks for the arrest of Grey. George Brooke was the brother and heir of Cobham; these two lives were all that stood between William Cecil, now Lord Cranborne, and a vast estate; and Cranborne was already promised in marriage to Northampton's niece. They put the case into the hands of Coke.

On Copley's first confession, Markham, Watson, Clarke, and Brooke were thrown into the Tower. Parham the dupe, and Brooksby the spy, were lodged in the Gate-house, near Cecil's lodgings in Whitehall. Barneby, the priestly informer, having nothing more to tell, was hidden in the Clink. Not many days elapsed before it was rumoured at Paul's Cross that Grey was in close arrest at Sluys, and not many more went by before the young Puritan peer was brought in a warship to the Tower.

Coke's brief against the prisoners was a work of legal art. Out of Barneby's report and Copley's confession he wove an appearance of three plots, which he proposed to call—

I. The Spanish Treason.
II. The Surprising Treason.
III. The Priests' Treason.

For the trial of these conspiracies, he proposed to have separate courts, so as to give each trial its due importance in the public eye. In the Spanish Treason, he indicted Count Aremberg, the Archduke's minister, together with Raleigh, Cobham, Grey, and Brooke, on a charge of plotting to deprive the King, and to raise his royal cousin, the Lady Arabella Stuart, to his throne. In the Surprising Treason, he indicted Grey and Brooke on a charge of conspiring to waylay and surprise the King as he rode from Greenwich to Windsor Castle. In the Priests' Treason, he indicted Markham, Copley, Parham, Watson, Clarke, and Brooke, on a charge of conspiring to change the government by force. Much was withheld from Coke. Nothing was said to him about the peace with Spain; but enough was hinted to tell him that Brooke must die. Hence, the luckless uncle of Cecil's son was included as a principal in every charge.

Cecil spoke, though in vague, suspicious phrase, of the whole affair as the Arabella Plot, and his creature Coke tried hard to include Lord Grey in a second charge. It had been often bruited through the town that Grey would marry the Lady Arabella; and if Coke could show that Grey had ever entertained this project, he could lay him open to proceedings under the Royal Marriage Act. Cobham, who was said to have recommended such a match, was questioned in the Tower, but his examination ended without supplying evidence fit to be adduced in court.

While these prisoners lay in the Tower awaiting trial, Don Juan de Taxis, Conde de Villa Medina, arrived from Spain. Don Juan's master wanted peace. Peace was worth to him more than a hundred thousand crowns a year, and this great sum of money his agent was empowered to spend in corrupting James's court. The wealth of two Indies flowed from the Ambassador's bounteous palm. Gems, feathers, perfumes, rained upon councillors' wives and on women who were thought to be more charming than their wives. In a month, Don Juan was the rage. Every one courted him, every one swore by him. Fine ladies, rustling in the silks of Seville, and pale with the pearls of Margarita, voted him the most perfect gallant they had ever met. The Countess of Suffolk, as Cecil's most confidential friend, was the prime object of Don Juan's courtesies. The great house, then rising at Charing Cross, was said, in reference to these gifts, to be plated with King Philip's gold.

Much of Don Juan's money passed into Cecil's pocket; for the minister knew the worth of peace to Spain, and when he sold his country to a foreigner, his pride compelled him to sell her at a noble rate. Don Juan could not dispute his terms. "Buy others cheap —pay Cecil all he asks," was the substance, though not the form, of Don Juan's daily message from Madrid. Cecil named his price—a king's ransom down in gold, and a yearly pension to be paid for life.

Northampton and Suffolk also obtained the most princely sums. When the terms of peace had been settled, Coke received an order from the Council to unmake his plots, and cast his materials into other shapes. The charge against Aremberg must be withdrawn, and the Spanish Treason must disappear. Coke must have been deeply hurt, for the brief which he had drawn was a triumph of legal art. When he began afresh, he remembered Cecil's phrase of the Arabella Plot, and he cast his confessions into a shape that would support the theory of such a conspiracy. But as neither Copley nor the priests had mentioned this lady's name, he was told even now, at the ninth hour, to drop her name, and to divide the plot into two new parts. When his brief was drawn, the plot consisted of the Main and the Bye. Raleigh was in the Main—Grey was in the Bye—Brooke was in both the Main and the Bye. One was a conspiracy to raise Arabella to the throne—the other was a conspiracy to change the government by force.

For reasons which can only now be guessed, the name of Grey was dropped at the last moment from the article charging Raleigh and Cobham with the Arabella Treason. Brooksby, not being sent to the Tower, expected to escape a trial; but unseen influences worked against the spy, who was carried down to Winchester like the rest, leaving his fair young wife at the Jesuits' lodgings at White Webbs.

The King rode down to Wilton Court, to be near the scene of trial; and in the quaint old house where Mary Sidney lived, and under the solemn cedars that her brother loved, gay pages fluttered, and wily courtiers mused; while the hardier gentlemen of the chamber leaped to horse and dashed into the neighbouring town.

Popham and Coke made very short work with the smaller fry of prisoners. A few hours sufficed for them to bully and condemn Brooke, Watson, Copley, Markham, and Clarke. Parham was spared. Brooksby, though pleading that he joined the conspirators only to betray them, was condemned to die. Clarke alone showed genuine courage. Having played his game and lost, his only trouble appeared to be that he, a man of order and of letters, should leave behind him a traitor's name.

Raleigh came up next—after Raleigh came up Cobham—and after Cobham, Grey. Grey was tried by his peers, some of them his personal enemies; one of them that Lord Southampton whom he had beaten in the public street. Dudley Carleton says that Southampton "was mute before his face," but spoke much against him when the lords "retired to consult among themselves." Lord Grey's defence was simple. If the thought of presenting a petition was high treason, he was guilty; if it were lawful, he was not guilty. To the charge of conspiring with Brooke and Markham to surprise the King, he offered his proud denial and defied the proof. Only thrice had he seen these men, and on the first suggestion of force being used he had peremptorily declined all further talk with them. The peers condemned him to die a traitor's death.

When asked if he had anything to urge why sentence of death should not be passed upon him, he answered —"Nothing." The court was awed into deep, pathetic silence. After a pause, he added, "Yet, a word of Tacitus comes into my mind,—*Non eadem omnibus decora.* The house of Wilton have spent many lives in their prince's service. Grey cannot beg his life."

Raleigh himself never passed that height; and the proud refusal of this young soldier of twenty-five to ask a pardon from the King amazed and fascinated James.

When Brooke was fallen by the axe, and the two priests were hung and quartered, the King made a fidgety secret as to whether he would go on or pause. Under the green trees and by the limpid streams of Wilton House two parties were contending night and day; the gentlemen who were fumbling the edge of Don Juan's gold, defending the verdicts passed and clamouring for what they called traitors' blood; while those who had kept their fingers free were crying out against the sentence as infamous, the witnesses as perjured, the peers as corrupt. The ladies were on the side of mercy; and all the prisoners were willing to ask for mercy, excepting Grey.

Pembroke sent to London for the Globe comedians, in order that the Teacher of his Age might help to infuse some mirth and tenderness into the royal councils; and William Shakespeare's troop rode down to Wilton on this gracious errand. One play was given before the court; and there is reason to believe that play was "Measure for Measure." The play was new; composed that very fall, as the many allusions to events then passing prove—to the plague, to the war, to the expected peace, to the proclamation, to the revival of obsolete laws, to the razing of a certain class of houses in the suburbs. Such an expression as "Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of Hungary's!" might have been heard in every street that summer; and the characters of Angelo and the Duke are but highly-coloured and flattering pictures of Cecil and the King. The play may have been written for the Wilton stage. That it was first produced before a courtly audience is clear from the text; not only from the passage on ladies' masks, but from the many allusions in it to James's easy nature and his great dislike to crowds. It may be safely gathered from the story of this play that the noble lines,—

> "Not the King's crown, nor the deputed sword,
> The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
> Becomes them with one half so good a grace
> As mercy does!"

were addressed from the stage of Wilton House to James.

The King, who had no poetry in his soul to be touched by noble phrases, caused the warrants to be drawn out and passed under the Great Seal for the execution of Markham, Cobham, and Grey; and Tichborne, governor of the castle, received instructions to prepare a scaffold in Castle yard, and strike off the conspirators' heads on Friday morning before ten o'clock. The Duke of Vienna could hardly have devised a vainer plot.

Friday morning came, and the party of clemency was in despair. The Wilton lawns were drenched with rain; the air was chill and raw; yet thousands of people swarmed from an early hour into the Saxon city, rolling over Castle Hill, choking up the city gates, spotting every balcony and roof with black; yeomen from the Sussex downs, gentry from the glebes and parks, pages and courtiers from Wilton House, possibly the Globe comedians, and the Globe poet himself. James was to prove himself that day a greater comedian than any in that famous troop.

Sitting in his room at Wilton House, the King called to his side a lad named John Gibbs, then raw from Scotland, barely able to make himself understood in English speech. The lad's face was unknown to Tichborne; that was the point of the King's joke, the fact out of which was to leap his great surprise. James put a paper into his hand, and bade him ride over to Winchester Castle, where he was to watch the proceedings until the axe was being raised to strike, when he was to rush into the ring, draw Tichborne aside, and show him the royal mandate. When the lad was gone, the King remembered that in his haste he had forgotten to sign his name. Riders flew after Gibbs, and brought him back, and the fault being mended, the Scotch lad dashed over the downs to Winchester, where he found the Castle yard crowded with Tichborne's men. These fellows pushed him back into the crowd, deaf to his cries, impatient of his Scottish twang; so that while the headsman was getting ready, Gibbs had to hang about the gate, fretting at the pikemen, and hoping that some one would arrive who would know his face and understand his tale.

Markham was brought out first to die; and after saying a short prayer, he was bending his neck to the stroke, when a quick cry from the crowd caught the sheriff's ear. Gibbs had found Sir James Hay, who cut a path for him to Tichborne's side. In a moment the seal was broken, and Tichborne learnt, under the King's own hand, that the prisoners were to be put—as it were—to the axe; but only in sport; and when they had been frightened to death, were to be told that the King had been graciously pleased to spare their lives. Having read these strange commands, the sheriff told Markham to stand aside.

Grey came out next—his footfall firm, his eye elate, his expression proud and gentle; for he had supped as well and slept as softly as he could have done at Whaddon Hall. A band of youthful nobles, few of them younger—none of them nobler than himself, marched with him from his cell to the Castle yard. Gay in his attire, as though the block to which he was going were a bridal board, his countenance bright with unearthly joy, he passed through the kneeling lines—the only man, perhaps, whose pulse beat calmly in all that quivering throng. Dropping softly at the headsman's feet, he poured out his soul in prayer; and when he had made his peace with God, he confessed his sins in the face of man, admitting his many offences, but haughtily putting away from him the stain of crime. The rain fell fast; but the crowd stood sadly in the Castle yard. From his prison window Raleigh was looking on. Grey made his sign; for the pang of death was passed; and he laid his neck for the lifted steel. Then Tichborne broke upon his peace. An error, said the sheriff, had crept into their proceedings; Cobham must die first, and Grey must abide for an hour in the hall.

When the ghastly comedy was played out the three prisoners were ranked in the Castle yard face to face; Tichborne read the King's letter of reprieve; and the people threw up their caps and cried "Well done!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

LAST OF A NOBLE LINE.

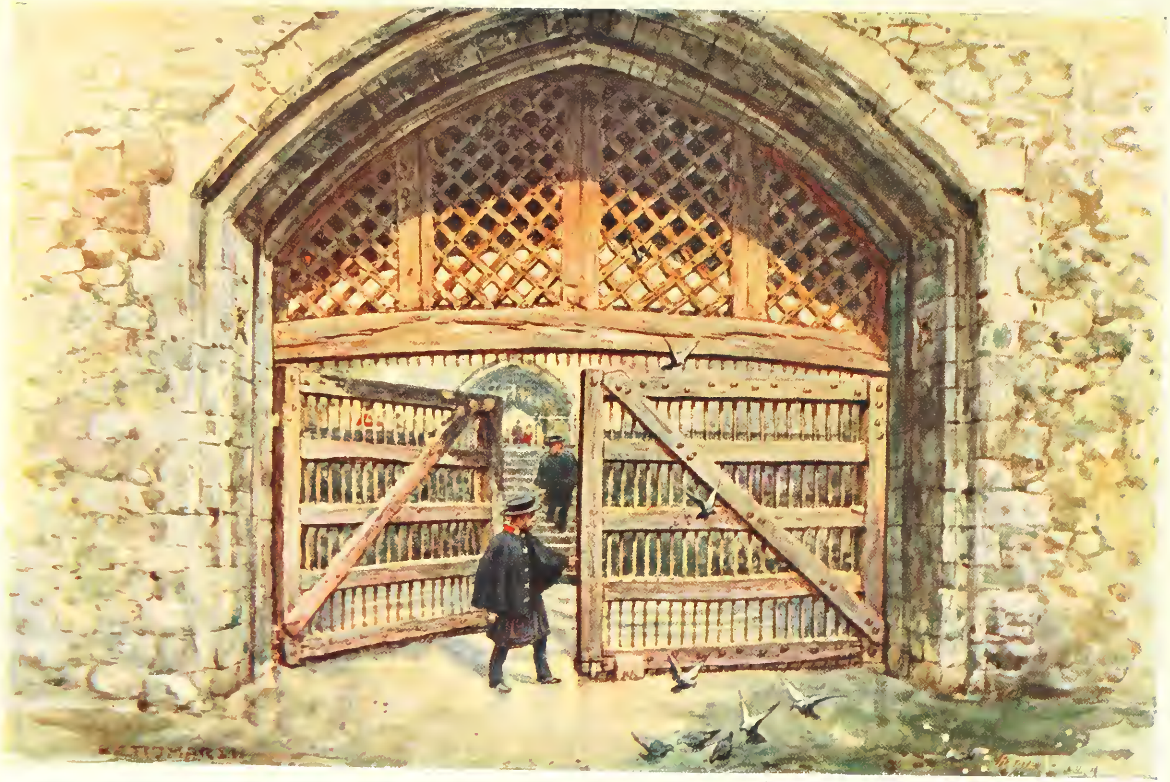
THE prisoners spared at Winchester were brought in time to the Tower; but only the three great ones were confined beyond the year. Within a few weeks Copley and Brooksby were pardoned and restored in blood. Markham was set free, on the sole condition of his going to live abroad; and Barneby was paid his wages and sent away. Raleigh and Cobham were left in the Tower, that Philip might be easy in his mind, and that Cecil might receive the rents from a large estate.

On his first return to the Tower, Lord Grey was miserably housed by the Lieutenant, Sir George Harvey, a man suspected by the court, and eager to regain the Secretary's good opinion. Grey complained to Cecil, who still professed to wish him well, and who was never harsh, like Northampton, beyond his need. Cecil stood his friend so far; and on a hint from court that though Grey must be kept in safety, he need not be kept in torment, Harvey remembered that he had an empty room in the Brick tower, Sir George Carew's official apartment; a tower which had been Raleigh's first prison, and was afterwards to be his last. This house stood on the northern wall, above the ditch. It was high and cold. As Sir George Carew was never in residence, the rooms were empty and unused; and Harvey, fearing that Grey would still object, informed his master that prisoners had been put into that tower in Peyton's time. Hither, then, Lord Grey was brought; and in this gloomy tower he spent the next nine years of his feverish life.

Eight pounds a week were allowed him out of his great estate. He was suffered to write to his mother and sister, and his servants were allowed in ordinary times to wait upon him. But his condition changed with the seasons and lieutenants. Generally his imprisonment was close and his treatment harsh. One likes to know the effect of gloom and chains, of damp and silence, on so proud a spirit. The old, old story comes up again:—they broke his health; and when they had ruined his health, they easily broke his heart. The man who could not be induced to beg for life, was worn into begging fretfully for such poor freedom as the liberties of the Tower!

Yet there was nothing mean in Grey from first to last. If his life in the Brick tower had not the beauty of Raleigh's life in the Garden-house, it had a nobleness all his own. In his younger days, he had amused his leisure by translating St. Cyprian's tract on "Patience," and when he found himself a prisoner in the Tower, he sent to his mother for his book, and asked that his boy might come to him and read for him. Cecil moved the King to grant him so much favour; but the King was in no mood to comply. "I beseech you," Grey wrote again, "to move the King for my scholar, who will yield me much comfort." When the request was granted, it was only on condition that the reader should occupy the same room with his lord, and should never leave it.

In his letters to his mother, Grey seemed more anxious to remove any lurking seeds of suspicion about his loyalty from her mind than to engage her in efforts for his worldly good. "Madam," he writes, "be not dismayed. I am in the Tower, but neither for thought nor deed against King and country."



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TRAITORS' GATE

6

Again he writes to her: "I fear not evil. My heart is fixed. I trust in the Lord."

Grey found it hard to be patient in the Brick tower, while Ostend was calling to him, as he thought, for help. The peace with Spain was a sore trial to his spirit, though he fancied that the terms of that peace would allow him to take service in the patriotic army. Markham had been suffered to serve under the Archduke, and he counted on the same indulgence in his own relations with the Prince of Orange. Then came the fall of Ostend.

While his old commander, Vere, remained in the Low Countries, he hoped against hope; but when that veteran was recalled by James, his big heart almost burst with rage. "No one accident," he wrote to his friend Winwood, a Puritan like himself, a partisan of the Dutch like himself, "hath so much grieved me as this of Vere, that he should forsake the Low Country employment, when my misfortune hath made me so unavailable.

There lay the core of his offence. Grey longed to be in the field, fighting against the enemies of his country and his faith; and the courtiers at Whitehall were earning pensions by preventing men like himself from offering their swords to the insurgent Dutch. Like Raleigh, Grey was the prisoner of Spain.

Years dragged on; but the pensions of Cecil and Northampton being duly paid, the prisoner lay in his lonely tower above the ditch.

At length, the war itself wore out; the Dutch republic was acknowledged; the twelve years' truce was signed; and the cause of their savage watch on Grey was in some degree removed. Yet year on year went by without a change. At length Northampton affected to remember Grey. He went down to the Tower, and saw his comrade of the court. The prisoner asked for leave to walk on the terrace under the Ordnance house, for the benefit of his health; a liberty which Sir Walter Raleigh and the Earl of Northumberland then enjoyed. This indulgence was refused, but a change was made in his lodgings from the gloomy Brick tower on the northern wall to the cheery Water-gate on the Thames. Grey fancied that Northampton had become his friend, after being for so many years his foe. The Earl was never to be feared so much as when he appeared to be doing good.

William Seymour (afterwards Duke of Somerset) had just escaped from the Water-gate, and his wife, the Lady Arabella, had been ordered to the Tower. Thus the lady who had been Grey's unwitting demon was once more brought within his range, and through the treacherous courtesies of Northampton the evil of his younger time repeated itself in his desolate cell. The royal lady lay in the Belfry and the Lieutenant's house; their prisons were therefore near each other. One of Arabella's women contrived to see Grey in the Water-gate, and his lordship was accused of sending love-messages to the royal lady. Grey denied it; turning the affair into an act of innocent flirting with her maid; but the rumour served Northampton's purpose, for the King became alarmed at what he supposed to be a new intrigue; the chance of pardon for the lady vanished, and Grey was ordered into close confinement in his tower.

This rank injustice broke his spirit.

In this Water-gate the last Lord Grey of Wilton died in the summer of 1614, eleven years after his first arrest in Sluys, leaving a mother who quickly followed her noble and gallant son, and a sister, from whom descend the Grey-Egertons, now the sole representatives of Arthur and Sibyl Grey.

> Inexorable Death in this sole stroke
> Had lopt the laurel and hewn down the oak.

Yet brief as were his days in the Tower, Grey long outlived the Jesuit schemer of White Webbs.

CHAPTER XLIV.

POWDER-PLOT ROOM.

ONE chamber in the Lieutenant's house has a life apart from the rest; a chamber on the upper tier, built on the old wall, with oaken panels and a window opening on the Thames. In a house of no great size, this room looks large, and the window in it is high and wide. No one could mistake it for a prisoner's cell; yet this chamber on the old wall is almost as famous in English story as the Belfry and the Bloody tower. The mantelpiece shows a royal bust; the wall is plated with records from a royal pen. Round the cornice are the shields of some of our noblest families, Howards, Somersets, Cecils, Humes, and Blounts. The bust, though stained to look like bronze, is carved in wood, while the panels are laden with much Latinity and many historic lies.

The wooden head is that of James the First—the lying record is that of the Powder Plot.

James used to speak of the Powder Plot as his masterpiece; a term which might be taken to hint that the King had worked it out from his own fancy, much as Cecil had worked out the Arabella Plot. But this could not have been his meaning. James had neither the wit to conceive, nor the steadiness to control, such a scheme of political vengeance. The plot was an actual plot, with living agents and a settled plan. Yet the dreamers who ascribe this plot, in general terms, to the Catholic clergy and laity go further astray from fact than the dreamers who ascribe it to King James.

The plot was not a Catholic plot.

This wild project of political murder was the work of a few converts from the English Church, conducted by a gang of outlaws and fanatics, not only against the conscience, but against the interest, of every Catholic in the realm. The Pope condemned it. The Archpriest condemned it. All the secular priests and all their sober flocks condemned it. What these children of St. Edward and St. Thomas had to do with the Powder Plot was to bear, during many reigns, under protests which were seldom heard, the social odium and political penalty of a crime which they abhorred.

Nor was this project properly a Jesuit crime. It found some friends in the Order of Jesus beyond a doubt; but these friends of the Powder Plot were of no high standing in the body, and the Society, as a society, gave them no support. Not one, but many, of the more eminent Fathers fought against the scheme. The General, Claudius Aquaviva, set his face against the plotters, when he could only guess their purpose; and when the details reached him, just as he was entering on the festival of Christmas, the noble old man was smitten to the heart.

Those who throw the blame on Catholics miss the great moral of the crime.

The men who contrived, the men who prepared, the men who sanctioned, this scheme of assassination were, one and all, of Protestant birth. Father Persons was Protestant born. Father Owen and Father Garnet were Protestants born. From what is known of Winter's early life, it may be assumed that he was a Protestant. Catesby and Wright had been Protestant boys; Guy Fawkes had been a Protestant; Percy had been a Protestant. The minor persons were like their chiefs—apostates from their early faith, with the moody weakness which is an apostate's inspiration and his curse. Tresham was a convert—Monteagle was a convert—Digby was a convert. Thomas Morgan, Robert Kay, and Kit Wright were all converts. The five gentlemen who dug the mine in Palace Yard were all of English blood and of Protestant birth. But they were converts and fanatics, observing no law save that of their own passions; men of whom it should be said, in justice to all religions, that they no more disgraced the Church which they entered than that which they had left.

The plot was the main clerical effort of that Spanish conspiracy against English law which the converted Jesuits had been trained to conduct; a political conflict in which these English Jesuits appealed to the sword and perished by the sword.

The first panel on the wall, a pious prayer, Pagan in form, yet far from classical in style, sets forth the virtues and dignities of those who were to have suffered in the explosion:

JACOBVS MAGNVS MAGNÆ BRITAÑIÆ
REX, PIETATE, JVSTITIA, PRVDENTIA, DOCTRINA, FORTITVDINE.
CLEMENTIA, CETERISQ. VIRTVTIBVS REGIIS CLARISS’; CHRISTIANÆ
FIDEI, SALVTIS PUBLICÆ, PACIS VNIVERSALIS PROPVGNATOR, FAVTOR,
AVCTOR ACERRIMVS, AVGVSTISS’, AVSPICATISS’.
ANNA REGINA FREDERICI 2. DANORV̄ REGIS INVICTISS FILIA SERENISS.
HENRICVS PRINCEPS, NATVRÆ ORNAMENTIS, DOCTRINÆ PRÆSIDIIS.
GRATIÆ MVNERIBVS, INSTRVCTISS’; NOBIS & NATVS &
A DEO DATVS.
CAROLVS DVX EBORACENSIS DIVINA AD OMNEM VIRTVTEM INDOLE.
ELIZABETHA VTRIVSQ. SOROR GERMANA, VTROQVE PARENTE,
DIGNISSIMA.
HOS, VELVT PVPILLAM OCVLI TENELLAM
PROVIDVS MVNI, PROCVL IMPIORVM
IMPETV ALARVM TVARVM INTREPIDOS
CONDE SVB VMBRA.

No one but James was likely to have penned this invocation; in English thus:

"James the Great, King of Great Britain,
Illustrious for piety, justice, foresight, learning, hardi-

hood, clemency, and the other regal virtues; champion and patron of the Christian faith; of the public safety, and of universal peace; author most subtle, most august, and most auspicious:

"Queen Ann, the most serene daughter of Frederick the Second, invincible King of the Danes:

"Prince Henry, ornament of nature, strengthened with learning, blest with grace, born and given to us from God:

"Charles, Duke of York, divinely disposed to every virtue:

"Elizabeth, full sister of both; most worthy of her parents:

"Do Thou, all-seeing, protect these as the apple of the eye, and guard them without fear from wicked men beneath the shadow of Thy wings."

Then comes a list of Lords Commissioners, followed by the chief panel of the series, in more pretentious and much worse Latin than the first. This panel, the work of Sir William Waad, contains the following votive offering from the King's Lieutenant of the Tower:

DEO OPT: MAX: TRIVNO, SOSPITATORI, &
TANTÆ, TAM ATROCIS, TAMQ. INCREDIBILIS IN REGEM
CLEMENTISS: IN REGINAM SERENISS': IN DIVINÆ INDOLIS & OP-
TIMÆ SPEI PRINCIPEM, CÆTERAMQ. PROGENIEM REGIAM, ET IN OMNEM OM-
NIUM ORDINEM, & NOBILITATIS ANTIQUÆ, & FORTITUDINIS AVITÆ ET PIETATIS
CASTISSIMÆ, & JUSTITIÆ SANCTISSIMÆ FLOREM PRÆCIPVUM, CONJURATIONIS
EXEQUENDÆ NITROSI PULVERIS SVBJECTI INFLAMMATIONE, CHRISTIANÆ
VERÆQ. RELIGIONIS EXTINGVENDÆ FVRIOSA LIBIDINE, ET REGNI STIRPITUS
EVERTENDI NEFARIA CVPIDITATE, A JESUITIS ROMANENSIBUS PERFIDÆ CATHO-
LICÆ & IMPIETATIS VIPERINÆ AVTORIBUS & ASSERTORIBUS, ALIISQ. EJUSDEM
AMENTIÆ SCELERISQ. PATRATORIBUS & SOCIIS SVSCEPTÆ & IN IPSO PESTIS
DEREPENTÆ INFERENDÆ ARTICULO (SALUTIS ANNO + 1605 + MENSIS NOV-
EMBRIS DIE QUINTO) TAM PRÆTER SPEM, QUAM SUPRA FIDEM MIRIFICE ET
DIVINITUS DETECTÆ AVERRVNCO, ET VINDICI, GRATES QUANTAS ANIMI CAPERE
POSSENT MAXIMAS ET IMMORTALES A NOBIS OMNIBUS, ET POSTERIS NOSTRIS
HABERE ET AGI GVLIELMUS WAADE MILES TVRRI A DOMINO REGE PRÆFECTUS,
POSITO PERPETUO HOC MONUMENTO VOLVIT, DIE NONO MENSIS
OCTB. ANNO REGNI JACOBI PRIME SEXTO
AÑO DÑI 1608.

In English thus:

"To Almighty God, the guardian, arrester, and avenger,—who has punished this great and incredible conspiracy against our most merciful lord the King, our most serene lady the Queen, our divinely-disposed Prince, and the rest of our royal house, and against all persons of quality, our ancient nobility, our soldiers, prelates, and judges; the authors and advocates of which conspiracy, Romanised Jesuits, of perfidious, Catholic, and serpent-like ungodliness, with others equally criminal and insane, were moved by the furious desire of destroying the true Christian religion, and by the treasonous hope of overthrowing the kingdom, root and branch; and which was suddenly, wonderfully, and divinely detected, at the very moment when the ruin was impending, on the fifth day of November in the year of grace 1605,—William Waad, whom the King has appointed his Lieutenant of the Tower, returns, on the ninth of October, in the sixth year of the reign of James the First, 1608, his great and everlasting thanks."

After this panel comes a third, containing a list of the conspirators' names, both clerical and lay, with tags of pious verse and foolish appeals to gods and men.

These panels on the wall record a series of noticeable scenes.

About the hour of noon on a dark November day in the year 1605, a very high company came down from Whitehall Palace to the Tower; men in whose sleepless eyes and troubled haste of speech a drama of unusual tension might be read. Sir William Waad, then new in office, met them by the gate; but the greeting which these great ones deigned to give their humble tool was scant. A small bent man, past middle age, with shuffling gait and furtive eyes, passed in, going quickly through the arch of that Bloody tower in which Raleigh was then confined, and straight across the Green to the new Lieutenant's house. The small bent man and three gallant personages who followed him had each a George upon his breast.

They met in this poor chamber on the wall to examine a prisoner then in the Tower on a matter which would cause the place in which they sat to be called in all future times the Powder Plot Room.

Who these persons were may be read on these panels—their names, their titles, and the offices they held—names which are familiar still, not by the Thames only, but in every zone of the earth in which our English speech is heard. In the chair sat Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, Secretary of State; and near him were Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, Lord High Admiral; Charles Blount, Earl of Devon, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, Lord Privy Seal. Is it too much to say that high as were the offices filled by these Knights of the Garter, the men had higher claims to notice than their official rank? Cecil was a son of Lord Burghley, a cousin of Sir Francis Bacon—Nottingham disputed with Raleigh the foremost place at sea—Mountjoy was hardly more renowned as the Pacificator of Ireland than as the friend of Sydney and the lover of Lady Rich—Northampton, the second and favourite son of Surrey, was a scholar, a writer, a speaker of the highest class.

Cecil laid before the lords a paper, drawn that very day (Tuesday, November 6), and written from first to last by the King's own pen. This paper, addressed to the Lords Commissioners for the Plot, directed certain peers and gentlemen, in quaint old Scottish phrase, to question a prisoner then in the Tower, and to make him tell the truth by gentle means, if gentle means would serve; if not, by slinging him to the hook and binding him on the rack.

The man to be examined had been seized on the previous night on the doorsteps of a house in Parliament Place, under circumstances to excite the wildest terror. Dragged by armed men to Whitehall and brought into the King's presence, he had been questioned by James himself as to who he was and what he meant to do; to which questions he had answered with reckless devilry, that he was a poor serving-man, and that he meant to slay, by a sudden burst of powder, laid in a vault beneath the throne, the King and Queen, the young prince, the royal councillors and judges, with the principal persons of the court. Pressed still more, he had given his own name as John Johnson and his master's name as Thomas Percy, one of the King's gentlemen pensioners, a kinsman of the great northern Earl. Bandying jokes with the guard, this fellow had shown a savage scorn of life which all but fascinated James.

After he had left the presence, a letter had been found in his clothes; a letter written in French, and by a lady's pen. This letter, found upon him open, was signed Elizabeth Vaux (the lady of Harrowden), and was addressed to him as Guido Fawkes.

At a sign from Cecil, Waad brought in his prisoner. Some of the lords, not all, had seen that face before; seen it for an hour, under the glare of fitful lamps, in the midst of scared, inquisitive eyes, when, roused from their beds, and hurried to Whitehall at midnight, they had heard from the royal lips a tale the like of which courtiers have seldom been called to hear in the dead of night from kings. They had seen the black brow beetling over those fiery orbs, now sullen with rampant rage, now rippling with low, fierce laughter, as the King, seated on the edge of his bed, forced out in gasps and screams his version of the powder and the mine; and now, in the fog of a November noon, they looked on that face again.

CHAPTER XLV.

GUY FAWKES.

A MAN to study with a curious art was the stiff, bronzed fellow, with sandy beard and fell of auburn hair, now standing in this Tudor room before judges of such high fame and power, and answering these lords of war and masters of law as lightly as though the inquiry were some tavern jest; giving the false name of Johnson, the false description of a serving-man, and only laughing roughly when they found him out.

Tall, strongly built, and thirty-five years old, he stood before them in the prime of all his powers. His face was good, in some of its aspects fine. His tones were those of gentle life; his words, though few, were choice; and his bearing spoke of both the cloister and the camp. Despite the grime upon his hands, the grime of coal and powder, he was evidently a man of birth. Mountjoy could see that he had been a soldier; Northampton found him an adept in the schools. Even Cecil, who knew a good deal more about him than he liked to say, was smitten by his jaunty air.

" He is no more dismayed," wrote the Secretary of State, "than if he were taken for a poor robbery on the highway." Not a dozen hours had yet passed by since he was seized in Parliament Place—seized in the very fact, with matches in his pocket, with a lantern behind the door, and in such guise and manner as made his conviction sure. All that could have happened to cross his purpose and crush his spirit had come to pass. His plans had failed, his friends were scattered, his cause was lost. Behind him lay the wreck of a life; before him lowered the jail, the rack, the gibbet, and the yelling crowd. All that he could call his own on earth was a day of feverish pain, an infamous and cruel death, a memory laden with a lasting curse. Yet the man was rock. The lords had spent a sleepless night, and he had slumbered like a child. They had been tossing on beds of down while he had been sleeping on a plait of straw. They had sought for rest in vain under painted ceilings, and he had been dreaming lightly in the darkest dungeon of the Tower. The Lieutenant, coming early to his cell, had found him sleeping "as a man void of trouble." Not that he was cold and strong, still less that he was dark and subtle. The man was open, and even frank. He told the truth, so far as he meant to speak, at once. When he told a lie, he told it of fixed design; and rather to screen some brother in misfortune than to save himself. He was neither mercenary, nor inscrutable, nor heroic; he was simply a fanatic, with the vices and virtues which belong to a fanatic. Like nearly all fanatics, he was a convert to his faith, glowing with the zeal which sharpens a fakir's knife and comforts a martyr at the stake. Fasting and observance had helped to drive him mad, until he felt, like many of those familiars of the Holy Office whom he had met in Antwerp and Madrid, that it was his duty to kill men's bodies on the chance of saving souls.

Cecil read the paper which he had received from James, a warrant containing sixteen questions to be put, with a power of compelling answers to these queries in case of need. This quaint old paper of instructions, which the lords must have had some sport in spelling through, may be given in the King's own form:

"This examinate wolde now be maid to ansoure to formall interrogatours.

"1 as quhat he is, for I can neuer yett heare of any man that knowis him.

"2 quhaire he uas borne,

"3 quhat uaire his parents names,

"4 quhat aage is he of,

"5 quhaire he hath liued,

"6 hou he hath liued and by quhat trade of lyfe,

"7 hou he ressaued those woundes in his breste,

"8 if he uas euer in seruice, uith any other before percie, and quhat they uaire, and hou long,

"9 hou came he in percies seruice, by quhat meanes, and at quhat tyme,

"10 quhat tyme uas this house hyred by his maister,

"11 and hou soone after the possessing of it did he beginne to his deuillishe preparations,

"12 quhen and quhaire lernid he to speake frenshe,

"13 quhat gentle womans lettir it uas that uas founde upon him,

"14 and quhairfor doth she giue him an other name in it then he giues to him self,

"15 if he uas euer a papiste, and if so quho brocht him up in it,

"16 if other wayes, hou uas he conuertid, quhaire, quhen, and by quhom, this course of his lyfe I ame the more desyrouse to know, because I haue dyuers motiues leading me to suspecte that he hath remained long beyonde the seas, and ather is a preiste, or hath long seruid some preiste or fugitiue abroade, for I can yett (as I saide in the beginning heirof) meite with no man that knowis him, the letter found upon him giues him another name, and those that best knowis his meister can neuer remember to haue seene him in his companie, quhair upon it shoulde seeme that he hath bene reccomendit by some personnis to his maisters service only for this use, quhairin only he hath servid him, and thairfore he uolde also be asked in quhat company and shippe he went out of englande, and the porte he shipped at, and the like quœstions wolde be asked anent the forme of his returne, as for these tromperie waires found upon him, the signification and use of euerie one of thaime wolde be knowin, and quat I have obseruid in thaim, the bearare will show you, nou laste, ye remember of the crewallie uillanouse pasquil that rayled upon me for the name of brittaine, if I remember richt it spake some thing of haruest and prophecied my destruction about that tyme, ye maye thinke of this, for it is like to be the laboure of suche a desperate fellow as this is, if he will not other wayes confesse, the gentler tortours are to be first usid unto him et sic per gradus ad ima tenditur, and so god spede youre goode worke. JAMES R."

These questions were put by Cecil, and the prisoner's answers were written down. His name was Johnson—he was born in Netherdale—his father was called Thomas, his mother Edith—he was thirty-six years old—he had lived in Yorkshire, Cambridge, and elsewhere—he had a farm of thirty pounds a year—his scars came of a pleurisy—he had served no one but Percy—he had served him since Easter 1604—his master had hired the house about Midsummer-twelvemonth—at Christmas last he had brought in the powder—he had learnt French in England, but improved it abroad—the letter was from a gentlewoman in Flanders—she called him Fawkes because he used to call himself so—he was brought up a Catholic—he was not a convert. Some of these replies were true; most of them were false.

Next morning, Wednesday, a sharper board of inquisitors came down to the Tower, and sent for Fawkes into the Powder Plot Room. Northampton occupied the chair, assisted by the Lord Chief Justice Popham and Sir Edward Coke. If England had been raked from end to end, the mates of these three men in craft of brain, in hardness of heart, could nowhere have been found. Fawkes soon felt that it was one thing to baffle soldiers like Nottingham and Mountjoy, another to fence with lawyers like Popham and Coke.

Northampton pointed to the rack, and told the prisoner to speak the truth, or he would tear it from his heart. To these new judges Fawkes confessed the facts, so far as they touched himself. His Christian name was Guy, his surname Fawkes. He was born in York, where his father, Edward Fawkes, had lived; but his father died about thirty years ago, leaving him a small estate, which he had spent. He took service with Percy under the name of Johnson, and by this name he was known in Parliament Place. He had sworn on the Primer never to betray his friends in the plot—he had taken the sacrament with that oath. Five was the original number, but five or six others had come in since. He was now sorry for what he had tried to do, since he saw that God would not suffer it to be done. He was not a priest. He could not name his accomplices on account of his oath, and he would not say where he had sworn that oath. All the five plotters swore the same oath as himself: they swore it a year and a half ago. Some speech had been held amongst them that they would free the prisoners from the Tower, that they would marry the King's daughter to a Catholic, and that they would raise her to the throne.

All these confessions made a good day's work, but after Northampton had left the Tower, Waad went down into Fawkes's cell, and, finding him full of talk, began to urge him, as he looked for grace, to set forth all that he knew of the plot from first to last; how the design arose, who were the agents, and what they proposed to do when the King was dead. Fawkes seemed touched in spirit; he had not yet been tortured; but the rack was before his eyes; and unless he gave up all his secrets the morrow would see him stretched. Waad left him that night in the belief that he would yield; but on his return to the cell next day a change had come upon the prisoner's mood. Fawkes would not speak, he would not write. Vexed at his stubborn spirit, the Lieutenant called his men, and bound his prisoner to the rack. Fawkes may have thought that he could bear the pain and not cry out, but after thirty minutes of the cord and pulley, he gasped out faintly that he would tell them all he knew.

A first confession was taken down. The plot, he said, was a religious plot; he heard of it first from an English gentleman in Flanders; and he went on to describe the mine, the powder, and the train. Later in the day he made a more important statement. The pain had quelled his courage, and the man who would have faced a blazing mine could not resist the slow, cold agony of the cord. On the rack he gasped out names, addresses, details of many kinds. So much matter being gained, the Lieutenant spoke with him once more. Why not cleanse his bosom? What had the Jesuits been about? Who had given him the sacrament? Broken in nerve, the strong man yielded; but he could not be persuaded to write his shame. If the Earl of Salisbury would come to him, and come alone, he would tell him everything which it concerned his Majesty to learn. A messenger from Waad soon bore this news to court, and almost as quickly as horses could devour the road between the Strand and the Tower, Cecil was closeted with Fawkes in the Powder Plot Room, listening to the first words from his lips which could be used in open court against his neighbours of White Webbs.

When these words were written down, the prisoner was asked to sign his name. He took up his pen, and essayed to write, but the quivering flesh refused to obey his will. "Guido," he wrote; the rest of his name he could not write. From that day forward silence on his part was vain; others besides himself were in arrest; some in the Tower—some in the Gatehouse—some in the Fleet—and then in gasps and spasms the singular facts of the Powder Plot came out.

But the story told in these gasps and spasms may be given with less waste of words in a closer form than that of a prisoner's record on the rack.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ORIGIN OF THE PLOT.

THE dumpy man called Tom, who rode so often to White Webbs with Mr. Catesby, was Thomas Winter, a younger brother of Robert Winter, a small Worcestershire squire. A shrewd fellow, who had seen the world, both in courts and camps, this Tom could patter in many tongues, and was familiar with many lands. In his youth he had fought against the King of Spain; but on falling under Jesuit influence, he had given up the cause of freedom and the profession of arms to spend his middle age in the secret service of Lord Monteagle, whose pay he took and whose man he was called. Going hither and thither, from London to Brussels, from Madrid to Rome, he had borne the latest news from Father Persons and Father Cresswell to their friends in Flanders and at White Webbs; and generally he had earned his wages by promoting that revolution which the Jesuits told his master would shortly come about.

Catesby and Tom had tried their luck in a street fight with a royal favourite in their ranks, and having been crushed, condemned, and fined, were anxiously seeking some safer way to upset their Queen. What could they do? The people were against them. Even the Catholics were against them. While the citizens were loyal and the lords alert, rebellion was clearly a waste of blood. What then? They came for counsel to White Webbs.

"Mr. Mese" had strange news to tell them; for he had just received from Rome, where Persons was then the ruling spirit, two Papal breves; one addressed to the archpriest, George Blackwell, and the Catholic clergy; the other addressed to the nobility and commons; in which breves the children of Rome were enjoined, on their salvation, to admit no prince except such as the Pope should appoint to reign over them. These breves were not to be published until the Queen was dead; but Garnet showed them to Catesby, by whom they were shown to Lord Monteagle and his cousin Frank. Monteagle had a villa near Hoxton, from which he could easily ride over to White Webbs; and Catesby hired a house in the same suburbs, at Moorcroft, under London Wall. These two gentlemen, seeing that such breves could never be enforced without foreign help, agreed with Father Garnet that two secret agents, one a Jesuit, the other a layman, should proceed at once to Madrid, with orders to find their way into the Duke de Lerma's cabinet, to assure that minister of Catholic support, and to urge that a Spanish army should be thrown upon these shores. Father Greenway was chosen by the Jesuits, Tom Winter by the laymen. Tom not only knew the country and spoke the language, but, as a deserter from his flag, was sure of a welcome from the monks and mistresses who governed Spain.

These secret agents were well received. Giving Lerma charts and maps of the English coast, they pointed out Milford Haven as the point where it would be best to land, as the Welsh people were Catholic, and a Spanish general, fortified in Pembroke, would have the friendly Irish at his back. But Lerma, though polite, was cold. The Queen was failing fast; a change must come, and his policy was the waiting game. This answer having been foreseen, Tom Winter had been told to urge upon the Duke that nothing could be done with James, and that the King of Scots must be cut off, he and his progeny, root and branch, so as to open a passage for the Infanta to come in under the Papal breves. But Lerma, pursing his darksome brow, said only that his friends must wait.

Had he by any sign or shrug approved of Tom Winter's hint that James should be cut off? We only know that Tom returned through Flanders, where he spread the latest news from Madrid; and that the policy of cutting off the King of Scots was from that time adopted in the cloister and in the camp. The very first batch of Fathers who came over in the *Golden Lion* talked openly of the King and all his house being speedily cut off. A priest sent word to Cecil that the duty of killing James was being canvassed in the English colleges of Cleves and Douai; and that two fanatics in holy orders had pledged their souls, if they might have the blessing of Heaven upon their deed, to cross the sea, gain access to his table, and stab him as he sat at meat.

On the day Elizabeth died, Catesby went about the town, watching events and eager for a sign; but in the afternoon he rode over to White Webbs, and told the Prefect that the new King had been proclaimed, that every one was pleased, that the city bells were ringing, and the streets alive with bonfires. When Garnet heard this news, he took the Papal breves from his desk, as things too dangerous to be kept, and threw them on the fire.

In Rome another spirit ruled the hour. Persons told the Pope that now was the time for his children to strike a blow. The day for intrigue was past, the day for action come. The Catholics, he cried, were ready; they only waited for a sign; and at a word from Rome, a hundred thousand swords would flash into the air. The King of Scots had forfeited his right, and they must bar his entrance in the name of

God and Holy Church. The cry which Persons raised in Rome was echoed by Owen in Brussels, by Garnet in Enfield Chase. But the cry was not taken up, and the Jesuits dared not commit themselves by a publication of the breves. Opinion too, veered round in the Roman court, where Persons fell into suspicion; and, what was worse for Garnet, Frank Tresham and Lord Monteagle were inclined to act with Northampton in supporting James. A new course had to be fetched, and Catesby, finding a friend in Ambrose Rokewood, a young Suffolk squire, who had been trained in the Jesuits' college at St. Omer, consulted Garnet and Greenway on the policy of seeking in Madrid the support they could no longer find in Rome. Kit Wright, a reckless fellow, who had been out in the streets with Essex, and had narrowly escaped the rope, was chosen to go over; and on his way to Madrid this agent of disorder met Guy Fawkes, who was proceeding from Brussels on the same black errand as himself. As Kit represented Garnet and Catesby, Guy represented Owen and Stanley, in this common appeal from Rome to Spain.

They met with no response; for Philip had neither ships nor men to bury in the Irish seas; and Lerma, who was counting his doubloons and conning his reports, imagined he could buy with gold from Cecil and Northampton far more than he could gain by Garnet's craft and Catesby's zeal.

Rebuffed on every side, the fanatics were in despair. Without a friend in Rome, in London, in Madrid, what could they do?

One course at least lay open. They could kill the King. No foreign help was wanted to "cut off" James, in what was then the commonest form of public assassination. They could blast him with powder, as an engineer blows down a wall. Had not his father, Darnley, been killed in this simple way? The thing was not only easy to do, but safe to do. Darnley had been killed in the Kirk of Field, and no one else had suffered by the shock. That which could be done in the Canongate, could also be done in Parliament Place. The House of Lords was larger than the Kirk of Field; but what should prevent them from using a larger blast? Bothwell had employed a dozen sacks of powder; why should not Catesby employ a hundred sacks? Powder was cheap.

The idea was not new, still less could it be called heroic. Every soldier had in those days helped to drive a shaft, and thousands of men who were not soldiers had heard the crash of exploding mines. The war then raging beyond the Straits was a war of engineers, and in the trenches before Ostend whole companies were occasionally blown into the air. Among the visitors at White Webbs, many had seen service in the field, so that the power of cutting off an enemy by a charge of powder was familiar to their minds.

A train had been laid against Farnese in the streets of Antwerp; a second such train had been laid against the Provincial Council at the Hague. Not once, but many times, the great Queen's life had been threatened by a Powder plot. One such attempt was made by Michael Moody; and in later times, Thomas Morgan, a pupil of Father Owen, had offered to carry out the scheme in which Moody failed.

If any one gave the main idea of the Powder scheme to Catesby, that man was Morgan. There is proof that Morgan told Hugh Owen of his plans, and that Owen explained them to his creature Fawkes.

This Thomas Morgan, otherwise known as Charles Thomas, a brother of Rowland Morgan, seminary priest, and of Harry Morgan, customer of Cardiff, was one of those dangerous exiles on whom Cecil kept a watchful eye. Himself a spy, his steps were always dogged by spies; and many a merry fellow who roused and drank with him in the Flemish wine-shops lived on the wages of their common shame. A tool of the Jesuits whom they hardly cared to own as friend, he was employed by them in work to which few could stoop; in following frail women, in tempting soldiers to desert, in watching base intrigues, and following to their source the scandals of a camp. For such foul things Morgan had a natural taste. He had spent his days between the back-stairs of a palace and the black-hole in a jail, now playing the part of pimp, anon of lover, and then of spy. After threatening Elizabeth's life he had blackened Farnese's name; on which the great Italian soldier had flung him into prison, instead of flinging him into the Scheldt. But rogues like Morgan are not easily stamped out. He got away to Spain, where he could show his teeth. One day we find him at Porto Santa Maria giving secret hints to the Adelantado of Seville on the way to surprise and capture English ships, and shortly afterwards in Madrid moving heaven and earth to get his contemptuous enemy recalled from those Netherlands which he had saved for the Spanish crown.

The fellow had changed his field, but he had not done with plots. He was now in Paris, in the pay of Mademoiselle Catharine d'Entragues, Marquise de Verneuil, the King's mistress, deeply engaged in the criminal intrigues which led to the arrest, and nearly to the ruin, of that royal favourite.

Catesby had a lodging on the river bank at Lambeth, near Horse Ferry, as well as one in Moorcroft, under the city wall. He was living in that village of boatmen and fishwives with Jack Wright, the elder brother of Kit, a ruined North Country squire, a great fencer, a pupil of the Jesuits, and a pardoned rebel, whom he housed and fed. The fine gentleman and his needy follower walked by the river, brooding over plans for "cutting off" King James. Before them, across the Thames, rose the majestic front of the House of Lords.

Within that pile stood the throne, on which the King would have to sit when he came from Whitehall to open his Parliament, surrounded by his wife, his son, his councillors, and his peers. Would not a train of powder laid below that throne destroy them all?

Wanting a fellow with more brains than Jack Wright by his side, Catesby wrote to Huddington, where Tom Winter was staying with his brother, Robert, in a very low state of mind. When Tom came up to Lambeth, Catesby explained his project. "This strake at the root," said Winter, musing; "but what if they should fail?" They could not fail, urged Catesby, if they got a man who knew his trade to construct the mine. At once he mentioned the name of Fawkes, with whom Kit Wright had journeyed into Spain.

The two fanatics deferred to Catesby's views; for Catesby was to them not only a man of daring spirit, but a fine gentleman—the lord of Lapworth and Ashby St. Leger, while they were only Jack and Tom. But ere they took that step from which they could never turn back, Tom urged that a last appeal should be made for help on the side of Spain; and Catesby, though he said it would come to nought, was willing to oblige his tools. He had to deal with the weak no less than with the strong. He had to ask what could be done when the blow was struck. He had to satisfy his friends before he could destroy his enemies; and Tom Winter imagined that when the old Catholic families saw how the search for help had been made on every side, and on every side in vain, many of those who would otherwise stand aloof might be induced to join them after the King was killed.

That last appeal could be made without loss of time. A great hidalgo, Juan Fernando de Velasco, Duke de Frias and Constable of Castile, was on his way to London, armed with powers to arrange the terms of peace. Velasco was then at Bergues, in Flanders, a small inland fortress near Dunkerque, where he was waiting for his final orders ere he crossed the Straits into Kent. To him they could send Tom Winter on a last appeal, and if, as they supposed, the Constable was bent on serving his earthly rather than his heavenly master, they could then go forward in their work with the certainty of finding troops who would join them with a conscience free from doubt. But in a mission of so much moment they must have Jesuit counsel and Jesuit help. They rode to White Webbs, and Garnet advised that Tresham and Monteagle should be asked to join in the message to Velasco, in order to give it importance in the Constable's eyes. Monteagle, Tresham, and Catesby held a meeting, at which Winter's instructions were drawn up and signed; but these three gentlemen, painfully aware how little they could pretend to represent the English Catholics, and certain that the Constable would ask their messenger why he had brought no letters from Northumberland, Montagu, and Mordaunt, told Winter to explain that the three gentlemen were of a quality most fit for such an enterprise, since they were not so deeply suspected and closely watched as the great Catholic peers. But the mission was, on Catesby's part, a blind. The true business on which Tom went over sea was to confer with Owen and engage the services of Fawkes.

Winter found Father Owen at Dunkerque in waiting on Velasco, who was still at Bergues. Owen walked with Tom to Bergues, where they saw Velasco, and learned from the Constable that he had not only received strict commands from his royal master to do good offices to the Catholics, but was bound in his own conscience to do them. As the Jesuit and the conspirator walked back through the marshes to Dunkerque, they canvassed Velasco's words. "Will they help us?" asked Winter. "Not a jot," said Owen; "they seek their own ends, and care nothing about us." Then Winter told the Father what the three men had contrived, and asked him whether Fawkes could be trusted in such a work. Owen said yes; Fawkes was in Brussels, but Owen undertook that he should start for London in a trice.

Then Winter rode to the camp before Ostend, to see Sir William Stanley and inquire of Fawkes's "sufficiency in the wars." Stanley spoke well of him; and, while they were talking together, Fawkes came in to salute his captain. "This is the gentleman," said Sir William, and the two men who were to labour in the mine shook hands. "Some good friends of yours," quoth Tom, "desire your company in England, and if you please to come to me, we will confer on that subject." Two days later, Fawkes rode over to Dunkerque, where they talked the matter over with Father Owen and other Jesuits; Winter explaining to them Catesby's plan for laying a train of powder below the throne. At last, near Easter term, the talk was over and the bargain made. Fawkes took the name of John Johnson, in which his pass was drawn, and the two conspirators crossed from Gravelines to Greenwich, where they took a pair of oars and pulled for Lambeth, and landed at Horse Ferry, near Catesby's door.

CHAPTER XLVII.

VINEGAR HOUSE.

IN Parliament Place, the narrow lane going up from the river stair, then called the Queen's Bridge, stood Vinegar House, a small stone tenement leaning against the Prince's chamber, which formed a part of the old palace known as the House of Lords. From the cellars of this small tenement a shaft might be driven through the foundations into the dark passages and vaults below the throne. Catesby supposed that these dark passages and vaults were empty; ready, in fact, to become the chambers of his mine. Vinegar House was, therefore, his Kirk of Field.

But how was he to gain possession? This tenement, a part of the crown estate, was held on simple lease by John Whynyard, yeoman of the wardrobe, whose official residence it was. What chance had a pardoned rebel, a notorious plotter, of getting such a house into his power? Catesby could not go and make inquiries; for his face being known to Cecil's spies, he could hardly have landed at the Queen's Bridge or strolled up Parliament Place without being watched. Tom Bates, his serving-man, was therefore sent across to see who lived in the house, and learn if it could be hired. Bates brought word to Lambeth that the yeoman's rooms were under-let to their old

Warwickshire neighbour, Henry Ferrers of Baddesley Clinton, the famous antiquary. Lapworth, in which Catesby was born, is but a mile from the moated old manor in which Ferrers lived. Yet Catesby dared not move one step; for the famous antiquary, though a Catholic, was a Catholic of the English school. In hiring such a place, he must have the use of some free and unstained name. What name? Jack Wright, his chum, was compromised like himself; but Jack had a brother-in-law in Thomas Percy, who seemed the very man to get Vinegar House from the collector of county pedigrees. Percy was a fine gentleman, of kin to the great Northumbrian Earl. A courtier by birth, a gentleman pensioner, in attendance on the King, he would excite no question by pretending that he needed a lodging near the court. This Percy had never been concerned in plots, and his reputation was that of a merry fellow, who spent his money in the Cheapside taverns and his health on the Bankside dames. But Wright could answer for a change having come over his sister's spouse. A wasted man of forty-five years, with lanky face and feverish eyes, Percy had been found by Jesuits in the stews, and brought by them to a sense of his abominable life. Once he had cared for nothing but a bottle and a bright eye, now his comfort lay in a daily conflict with the flesh. He had a grievance, too, which might help to serve them; for, in his opinion, the King had used him as a tool and mocked him as a dupe.

Catesby, who knew that Percy was sore in spirit, invited him to the house at Lambeth, in which Wright was living, and to which Winter came. "Well, gentlemen," said the new-comer, "shall we always talk and never do?" That was the key to strike; and Catesby, taking him aside, explained to him the project—showing him the House of Lords, which they could see from his window—telling him how they would drive the shaft from the cellars of Vinegar

House, and giving him the names of those who were already privy to his hope. Percy entered into the design at once, for his hatred of the prince who had deceived and mocked him was at fever-point.

A lodging was taken for Guy Fawkes (Mr. "Johnson") in the house of Widow Herbert, in Butcher Row, an alley behind St. Clement Danes. To this house in Butcher Row came Father Gerard from White Webbs, bringing with him the stuff to decorate an altar, bread and wine for the sacrament, and all the things required by a priest when celebrating mass. An upper room of Widow Herbert's house was turned into a chapel; and when the priest was ready for his part, Catesby, Percy, Tom Winter, Jack Wright, and Fawkes assembled in the house—a quaint old Tudor pile at the corner of Clement's Lane—first in the lower room, where they swore each other upon the Primer, and then in the upper room, where they heard Father Gerard say mass, and took from his hands the sacrament on that oath. Each of the five conspirators was sworn upon his knees, with his hand on the Primer, that he would keep the secret, that he would be true to his fellows, that he would be constant in the plot.

The question now arose more sharply—How were they to get possession of Vinegar House? The good old antiquary, it seemed, was seldom in town, and might be persuaded to sell his lease; but on application being made to Ferrers, they found that he had no power to sell, unless with Whynyard's knowledge and consent; a thing which it might be hard for them to get. Percy made the task his own. Whynyard was away from town attending on the court, and when Percy spoke to his wife Susan, the thrifty woman made some ado about it, as she knew that to let an official residence was wrong; but on Percy hinting that he would buy her "good-will," her scruples melted into air. Besides the money, she felt that a gentleman pensioner might be a good friend to a yeoman of the wardrobe. Yet Mrs. Whynyard was prudent enough to ask for references, and she only parted with the key of her house on the pledge of Sir Dudley Carleton and other of the Earl's gentlemen. Percy was to pay twenty pounds to Ferrers for his lease, and four pounds a quarter for his rent.

A small tenement adjoined Vinegar House, in which Gideon Gibbins, the porter, lived. This tenement Percy was to have at any time he pleased; and in the meanwhile, Mrs. Gibbins, the porter's wife, was hired to keep his house.

Vinegar House, like many official lodgings at the court, had only one bedroom; so that when Percy brought Guy Fawkes, in the character of his servant "Johnson," to the house, he had to lie elsewhere himself. Percy made a friend of Mrs. Gibbins, as well as of Mrs. Whynyard, so that little was said about his going and coming to Parliament Place. He was said to be at Sion, at Alnwick, at Wressil, at Petworth, busy about the Earl's affairs.

The conspirators had got their cellar, and only a dozen feet of masonry divided them from the passages and vaults below the throne. But the house was too small for a magazine, and stood in a lane too much exposed. They would require a second house in which to hoard the planks, the powder, and the mining tools—a house near the river, and not too far from Parliament Place. On looking round, they saw that Catesby's lodging on the Lambeth side would do; but his housekeeper could not be trusted; and before they could begin to pile up planks and powder they must find some "honest fellow" to keep their store. This "honest fellow" they found in Robert Kay, a reprobate son of Edward Kay, Vicar of Staveley. Kay was starving in the streets, having left the service of Lord Mordaunt, in whose family his wife was an upper nurse. Kay took the oaths and went to the river-bank, on which Catesby removed to his place in Moorcroft, under the city wall.

In this lonely house by the river-side, Winter and Kay began to collect the tools, to frame the planks, and to prepare the powder, which they afterwards boated over in the dead of night, and put on shore in a covered nook of the wharf near the Queen's Bridge. Except from the river, it was impossible to see their boat, and only then by persons who were close in shore. One autumn night, a servant from the Wardrobe office, coming late to Westminster, and going under the wall of Sir Thomas Parry's garden, saw a strange boat by the wharf, with men going to and fro through the back-door of Percy's house; but one of these men being Gibbins, the porter, he thought no more about it. Gibbins had been taken into Percy's pay.

Some months elapsed before Fawkes was ready to begin the mine; for Vinegar House being public property, held by the yeoman on simple lease, he was subject to interference of many kinds. Once, indeed, Fawkes was thrown into despair by news that the house was wanted by the crown.

Parliament was sitting, busy with fifty committees and conferences, when the King brought forward his great and premature scheme for a legislative union of the two kingdoms. Warm debates took place on this proposal, in which Bacon played the leading part. The judges objected to the change of title from England to Great Britain; sixteen commissioners, of whom the first was Bacon, were appointed to consider the project in all its bearings on policy and law; and as room for Bacon and his fellows could not be found in the palace proper, the adjoining tenement was ordered to be cleared. In fact, those famous conferences between Bacon and Hamilton, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, which are celebrated in the "Essays" as an example of grave and orderly proceedings in affairs of state, were held in Vinegar House.

Surprised by this bad news, Fawkes sent for Tom Winter, who quickly came in to see what could be done.

The powder, planks, and mining tools could hardly be taken away unseen. The lesser danger was to leave them; yet the plotters must have left them in despair; since the chance of a discovery hung on such accidents as that of a servant going down into the vaults. Bacon and Hamilton, with some of the best gentlemen of England and Scotland, met for many weeks to debate the terms of union in a powder-magazine!

At length their work was done, and the Commissioners went away, not dreaming of the perils from which they had so narrowly escaped. Then Fawkes returned to arm and strengthen his house, so that he and his fellows might be able, in case of sudden attack, to resist some hours. The four gentlemen who were to be his companions in the mine had all seen service, more or less, and two of them had been regularly trained to arms. Jack Wright was said to be the finest swordsman of his day.

When all was ready for them, the five confederates came to Parliament Place late in the night, and one by one, unseen, each with his pockets full of baked pies and boiled eggs. They went down into the cellar, carrying with them iron bars, and powder, and holy water, to find that the task on which they were entering was beyond their strength. When wasted and worn by toil, they fetched in Kay from Lambeth, leaving the house locked up, and swore Kit Wright of the brotherhood; but, when all was done, the seven were found to be as weak in presence of the stone foundations as the five. Fawkes, who kept the watch while his fellows toiled in the mine, gave notice of the coming of any one down the lane. Much time was spent in grubbing at the stone before an incident let in a flood of light upon their minds. What did they expect to find on the other side of that solid wall? Large vaults and passages lying below the Prince's chamber and the House of Lords; but in what state could they expect to find these passages and vaults? What if they were tenanted? A noise was heard in the earth—the miners sprinkled holy water on the ground; but still the noise went on. What could it be? They sent for Fawkes, who listened on the ground with a miner's ear. As he could make no guess as to whence it came, he covered his dress with a porter's frock, and went upstairs into the street. In a closed court behind the Prince's chamber he found a low door open, with men going up and down the steps, which led, as he could plainly see, into the passages and vaults beneath the House of Lords. On prying further, he learned that a sale of coals was going on; for Andrew Bright, distiller of sweet herbs to the court, the tenant of these vaults, was selling off his stock and giving up his lease to one Skinner of King Street, for the purposes of his trade.

When Fawkes returned with this news, the confederates saw that their shaft was a mistake; for what would they gain by driving through a dozen feet of granite to arrive in a magazine of goods? They must get those vaults. They must get them at any cost. But how? Skinner was now their man; but how could they induce him to forego his lease? What lie could they invent, that would not seem a lie? They hit on a device, which Percy was to put in train. Going to Mrs. Whynyard, Percy told that dame that his wife, who was then in the country, wished to come up and see the town. She was to live with him at Vinegar House, to be near the court; but before she came, he wished to lay in stores of coals and billets, and would therefore like to hire the adjoining vaults. If she could help him with Skinner, he would give her twenty shillings for her trouble, and pay her one year's rent in advance. Skinner's rent was four pounds a year, and Percy offered to pay her five pounds down. This money tempted her, though she felt some qualms; and going up to King Street, she arranged the business with Mrs. Skinner, who undertook, for a present of forty shillings, to persuade her husband to oblige a gentleman, who was not only a kinsman of Northumberland, but a servant of the King.

The place now bought for a year for seven pounds was a long series of passages and vaults of Early English work, with walls of enormous strength, and a roof supported by beams and shafts like those in the White tower. Being low and dark, the stores brought into them from the street could be easily hidden out of sight. The task of the plotters was therefore done so soon as the boats had ferried the sacks of powder across from the Lambeth side, and Fawkes had covered them over with sticks and stones, with broken glass and a litter of coals.

Vinegar House being now ready for Mrs. Percy, the gentleman left for the country, telling Mrs. Whynyard that he was going away to fetch his lady up to town.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CONSPIRACY AT LARGE.

THE comrades parted company in Parliament Place, each of the seven going off to his several home, conspirators at large.

Giving up his keys to Mrs. Gibbins, Fawkes went back to Flanders, where he had work to do, which could only be done through Father Owen and Sir William Stanley, now recognised in Butcher Row and Enfield Chase as the Foreign Minister and General of the plot. On looking to the moment when the blow was struck, the fanatics saw that two things would be wanted in that hour of need:—an armed force within easy reach of the Tower, and a favourable disposition on the part of foreign courts. The two great men in Flanders could promote these ends. Owen was the most active and experienced agent in court and camp. The exiles would obey his slightest hint, and the statesmen of Europe would listen to him more readily than to any other English priest. Stanley could arm and drill the volunteers whom Owen drew over to their cause, so as to hold a force in hand to cross when the mine was fired and the King was slain. Some doubts were felt as to whether it would be safe to trust these exiles with the secret; but Catesby overcame all doubts by saying it must be done; and Fawkes arrived in Brussels empowered to tell the Jesuit and the General all.

Stanley was then in Spain; but Father Owen received his news with rapture. Yes; they could count on him. Of Stanley he was not so sure. That exile was in Madrid, persuading Lerma to make his peace with James; and he would hardly tie his hands by entering into yet another plot. But Owen, believing he would fail with Lerma, expected him back in Brussels with the bitter heart of a newly disappointed man. The Father undertook to deal with him at the proper time; and he pledged his word to Fawkes that when the deed was done, Sir William and his regiment should cross the Straits and march upon the Tower.

The Jesuit also took upon himself to prepare the way for them in Rome, where, at the moment, things were looking black for the cause in which they had staked their lives. The Pope seemed more and more inclined towards peace; the English College was in disgrace; and Aquaviva, at the personal request of Clement, had ordered Persons to retire from Rome. The Jesuit was in Naples, fretting his life out in that Spanish city, while the Pope was receiving messages from James with every mark of personal good-will. To have an agent in Rome was now essential; and, with the advice of Catesby, Sir Edmund Baynham was sent by Father Owen into Italy, instructed to prepare the Roman court for what was coming, and to justify it when the crash should come.

Catesby rode down to Lapworth with Jack Wright, whom he left in the old manor, while he rode on to Oxford with Tom Winter, whither he had called two country squires to meet him; Robert Winter, of Huddington, Tom's elder brother, a slow and rather stupid fellow, and John Grant of Norbrook, one of those reckless devils who had been out with Essex in the Strand. These squires he meant to draw into his plot.

As the fine gentlemen of the circle, Catesby and

Percy had a place and power apart from the other five. Fawkes had been a servant to Lord Montagu. Winter was a servant to Lord Monteagle. Kay had been a servant to Lord Mordaunt. Jack Wright, the fencer, was a ruined man, whom Catesby had to feed and lodge. Kit Wright was poorer than his brother Jack. The money which had gone in hire of houses and in pay of men was either Catesby's money or Percy's money. Large sums were needed to conduct their enterprise, and no one could suggest a way of raising funds except by drawing on the purses of richer men. But where could they find such comrades? Men with money are shy of plots. This Catesby and Percy told their fellows, saying, truly enough, that many a country squire might lend them his money, and even promise them his sword, who would not care to put himself wholly into their power by giving in his name. On this ground Catesby asked from the five a singular and dangerous power; no less than that he and Percy should be free to communicate their secret to any one they pleased, if it were done in the presence, and with the consent, of any sworn brother. That power was given up to them; for how could Jack and Tom, Kit and Guy, resist such men?

When Robert Winter heard from Catesby's lips of the design in which his brother Tom had risked his neck, he turned away sullenly, saying the project was too dangerous, and would be sure to fail unless the Catholic powers abroad and the Catholic lords at home should give their aid. John Grant raised no objection to the mine; and after much debate, the two country squires were sworn into the plot.

Tom Bates, the serving-man, was now brought in, from fear of his idle tongue. Being much about Vinegar House in waiting on his master, Bates had come to know of the mine and vault; and Catesby knew of no way to shut his mouth except by swearing him on the Primer, and making him a party in their perils. Bates had no brains for such a work, and in his very next confession he blabbed out the secret to his priest, whose game it was to have known nothing about the design on foot. The priest was Father Greenway, one of Garnet's circle at White Webbs, and the holy man could not pacify Bates without telling him, in express terms, that the cause was good, that he must keep the secret, and that then only he should have absolution for his sins.

From Oxford Catesby rode down to Bath, where Percy was drinking the waters for his health. Their work was going on well, yet many things had to be arranged before the blow was struck. The King and Prince being slain, they must get Charles and his sister Elizabeth into their keeping, to use as policy should prompt them. Charles, it was hoped, would be in London; Elizabeth was at Combe Abbey, two miles from Coventry. Percy undertook to seize the Prince, Catesby the Princess. As an officer of the household, Percy could go into the Prince's chamber, and he arranged to be there when the blow was struck. He was to station a dozen men at the palace doors; to post three mounted gentlemen at the court gate; and then go in—with a trusty friend—and chat with the Prince until the crash was heard in Parliament Place, when he was to hurry Charles away. Catesby, on his side, was to call his Catholic friends together at Dunchurch, near his seat of Ashby St. Leger, on pretence of a great hunting-party, which he hoped Lord Harrington and the knights in attendance on Elizabeth at Combe would be induced to join; so that the confederates, moving secretly and rapidly from many points on the Abbey, might take the Princess by surprise, and all but alone.

But more was needed than a plan of operations. They needed money, and they needed men; for both of which they saw that they would have to go beyond the narrow circle of converts to their faith. Catesby urged on Percy that many gentlemen would trust him and help him who would not put their lives into the hands of all by taking a formal oath; and Percy, knowing from his own experience that this was true, raised no objection to Catesby's proposal that each of them should have the power, without consulting their comrades, to act from time to time in the common cause as in their judgment should seem well. Percy consented to this new and still more dangerous stretch of their separate power.

As the time to act drew near, the man who had most to gain and most to lose began to play with his comrades' lives, but only as he fancied for their good, because he knew better than his fellows how far he could go; putting this man on his guard by a hint—taking that man into his confidence by an oath; telling half the truth to one—the whole truth to another, according to the service which he hoped to secure from each. Armed with his new powers, he rode to Huddington, Robert Winter's seat, from which he wrote to Stephen Littleton of Holbeach, and Humphrey his younger brother, members of an old Catholic family, to whom he dared not reveal his plot in full. He told these squires that he was raising a Catholic regiment for the Cardinal Archduke's service, to consist of three hundred horse; and he offered to Stephen the rank of captain in this troop. Stephen, pleased with his prospects, undertook to raise money and men, and to hold his company in readiness to march.

Ambrose Rokewood was a man of similar stamp. A great breeder and lover of horses, of which he kept a stud at Coldham Hall more fit for a prince than for a country gentleman, it was of vast importance for Catesby to bring Rokewood in. But the task was not easy; for the Suffolk squire, though educated in a Jesuits' college, and equally attached to Garnet and to Catesby, with whom he had acted in the dangerous affair of Wright's mission to Madrid, was of an ancient

Catholic race, not much inclined to adopt such desperate remedies for his wrongs as public murder in the name of God. His love for Catesby was like that of a woman; yet his soul recoiled from the thought of shedding blood, and he told his tempter he could not in conscience join him. Long and subtle were the arguments employed to draw him in. The case, his friend assured him, had been settled by the Catholic divines; a case of conscience having been drawn up, in which the facts set forth would cover their own design. But many persons, urged the squire, would perish in the explosion who had done no harm. They could not help that, Catesby said; and their divines had laid down the rule, that if an action, otherwise right, could not be done without killing some innocents, it might still be done. Rokewood was not convinced, and even his love for Catesby might have failed to draw him in, had not the persecuting spirit of the times inflicted on his proud nature a bitter sense of personal wrong, in his indictment before the Middlesex magistrates as a notorious Papist and recusant. Full of fear and sore with insult, Rokewood threw himself into his tempter's arms.

The snare was thrown at Sir Everard Digby. Digby, educated in the National Church, had been caught by the Jesuits in his early manhood, and his house of Goathurst, in Bucks, had long been used as a hiding-place for priests. When Catesby spoke to him, Digby started at the news; he could not seize the principle of such a crime; and when Catesby told him it was sanctioned by the Jesuits, he expressed some doubts of such a fact. But on consulting Father Fisher, his confessor, he learned that what Catesby said was true; on which he promised his support and a contribution of fifteen hundred pounds.

This doubt was also found in his cousin Frank. Frank Tresham had of late kept clear of plots, believing, like Monteagle, that his wiser course would be to make friends at court, and take his chance with Northampton and the Catholic peers, instead of with Garnet and the converts of White Webbs. He was not mad; he shrank with visible dread from the crime of murder; and before the secret oath had passed his lips, his friend was troubled with a ghastly fear. Would Frank betray him, Catesby asked himself? More than once he wished he had not spoken. Frank was hot and cold by turns; suggesting doubts as to what would be said in Rome; proposing questions as to how their brethren could be saved; and generally objecting to the mine and the march on Combe Abbey as sure to fail. Yet, as Frank promised help in money and in men—in money, two thousand pounds—his jealous cousin could only take his gold and stick a poniard in his belt; so that on the slightest sign of treason he could plunge the steel into his heart.

Mrs. Vaux of Harrowden, sister-in-law of Ann and Helen, was used by the conspirators without being sworn. This lady, by birth a Roper, was of ancient Catholic stock, and not to be trusted with a knowledge of Catesby's plans. But she was asked to invite such persons to her house as Henry Hurlstone and other squires whom Garnet and Catesby desired to meet; gentlemen who might be persuaded to join the hunt at Dunchurch, in the hope that when their blood was stirred by news from Parliament Place, they could be drawn into marching on Combe Abbey with the rest.

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CHAPTER XLIX.

THE JESUITS MOVE.

THE time was now come for the Jesuits to move, so as to rouse their pupils without committing themselves too openly to the plot.

Good news came in from Rome, to which Persons had returned from Naples, at the call of a new Pope. Clement was dead, and Leo, his successor, was also dead. In thirty days three Popes had reigned in Rome, the last of whom, Paul the Fifth, a man of chilled and fervent passions, gave his ear to the English Jesuits, as councillors who *must* understand their country better than Italian cardinals and Spanish monks. Paul heard nothing from Persons about Catesby's crime, but he listened with zeal to his statements on English affairs, and promised his wily visitor that he would think over his request for help in the task of converting souls to God. Persons was about to send a priest to London, one Father Robarts, to stand by the side of Fawkes. It was of high importance that Robarts should go to England fresh from the Pontiff's presence, and with the Pontiff's blessing on his head. Persons obtained for him a special audience and benediction from Paul, and then despatched him to London, with orders to report himself to Garnet and Catesby, and to take up his post where those councillors should suggest.

Good news came in from the Flemish camp, to which Stanley had returned, as Father Owen expected, in bitter mood. He was easily induced to join a plot in which he was to play the most brilliant part. His comrades in London heard with delight that he was raising a brigade of Swiss, Walloons, and Irish, which he would lead in person across the Straits so soon as he received a summons from White Webbs.

Coming back from Flanders, Fawkes took up his abode in Vinegar House, to which Mrs. Percy was said to be coming from her country-seat. He paid the quarter's rent then due, and Mrs. Whynyard observed that his purse was full of gold. But he often went from home, and stayed away all night. In fact, he kept his old lodging in Butcher Row at Widow Herbert's house, as a more convenient place of call for his friends than either the tavern in Carter Lane or the house in Parliament Place. Mrs. Herbert hardly liked her lodger, whose coming and going she could not quite make out; but he paid his rent to the hour, and was much away from Butcher Row—points in his favour in the landlady's eyes. Often he was at Moorcroft and White Webbs in secret conference with Catesby and Tom. His masters deemed it prudent for him to be rarely seen in Parliament Place.

Early in the year, Father Garnet, Father Oldcorne, and the two ladies, left White Webbs for the midland shires, where the chief conspirators were gathering into knots and groups. "Mrs. Perkins" left her servant James in the house.

They began their travels in the double character of laymen and of priests. On the road and at innyards, Garnet was "Mr. Mese," Oldcorne was "Mr. Perkins," while in the houses of their penitents they were known as Father Walley and Father Tesmond. The ladies had a similar choice of names. Ann was "Mrs. Perkins" on the road, Mrs. Vaux in the house; Helen was "Mrs. Jennings" on the road, Mrs. Brooksby in the house. Brooksby was sometimes with them, oftener he was far away. They seldom slept on the road, and never when it could be helped, but passed from one Catholic mansion to another, under secret arrangements, which never failed.

In June they came to White Webbs for a week, and left it for a second round of visits, on the close of which they came home again for three or four days.

The time was now come for every one to assume his post. The Fathers held a council, and, when it broke up, the Prefect and his two most trusty brethren separated never to meet again. Garnet was to go into the midland shires. Oldcorne, under his lay name of "Perkins," was to remain in London. Greenway was to cross over to Flanders. By this arrangement, each knot of the conspirators would have a Jesuit in their midst.

The two ladies were to ride down with Garnet, so as to be at head-quarters; but ere they rode away, "Mrs. Perkins" called her servant James, and gave him charge of her house, with orders how to act. The house was to be kept open and the stable ready to receive her friends. Some gentlemen would call, and beds must be kept for them. He must see to their comforts, and look well after their horses. Then the company rode away for the last time, going straight to Goathurst, Digby's seat in Bucks, where they found the knight and his lady, Father Fisher their confessor, Ambrose Rokewood and his wife, with a company of some thirty squires and dames.

The Prefect had arranged a picturesque and striking scene, as prelude to the tragedy in Parliament Place; a pilgrimage to some holy well, in which the men and women could equally have their part. He chose St. Winifred's Well in Flintshire as the term of their journey; and after a mass of special meaning had been said at Goathurst, the whole company mounted and rode away, with Father Garnet and Father Fisher in their midst. The first resting-place of the cavalcade was Norbrook, where Grant received them, and Garnet said mass; the second, Huddington, where Winter received them, and Garnet again said mass. From Huddington they rode to Holt, where the ladies left their horses, and putting off shoes and socks, walked bare-footed to the well. A special mass was said once more; after which the party spent a night in the open air with the Flintshire saint. When daylight came, the penitents walked back to Holt, put on their shoes and socks, and returned the way they had come, through Huddington and Norbrook to Digby's house, where the company dispersed to their several homes; all the guests going away except Garnet, Mrs. Brooksby, and Ann Vaux.

Lapworth, Catesby's house, near Warwick, was the natural centre of the plot; but Lapworth was too small a place; and on the advice of Catesby, Sir Everard Digby moved to Coughton, Thomas Throckmorton's seat, near Alcaster, a central station and convenient house. Rokewood, also, on the same suggestion, hired Clopton, near Stratford-on-Avon, from Lord Carew. Jack Wright was at Lapworth; Thomas Morgan, the assassin, was at Norbrook with a female companion of dubious fame. Stephen Littleton was at Hagley, waiting for his summons to mount and march.

When all was ready for the blow in London, Father Garnet and the two ladies rode over from Goathurst to Coughton, where the Prefect lodged in the midst of his unruly scholars until he heard from Digby that the plot had failed.

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CHAPTER L.

IN LONDON.

IN spite of his haughty bearing, Catesby was much perplexed in mind.

He feared that his cousin Frank was false, that his enterprise would fail, that his neck was forfeit to the law. The last ten days of his London life were spent, with intervals, at the lonely house in Enfield Chase.

Coming up from the shires in company with Guy Fawkes, he stopped on Friday, October 25, at White Webbs, to which house he called Tom Winter from Montagu Close. Reports had reached him that Prince Henry would not attend his father in the House of Lords; in which case all their pains in seizing the Princess Elizabeth at Combe Abbey, and the Duke of York in Whitehall Palace, would be thrown away. The father killed, his son would be king. Could Winter say whether these reports were true? Yes, Winter had heard this news. "Then we must have our horses beyond the water," cried his chief; "and a company to surprise the Prince, and leave the Duke alone." They sent word to Percy, then in the North, to ride up to London with his utmost speed.

What lay with Catesby had been done. The mine was laid, the torch was ready, and the man was sure. A boat was lying near the Queen's Bridge, by which it was hoped that Fawkes could push into the stream, so as to avoid the shock and ruin of the mine. Lower down the river lay a vessel, ready to set sail, by which he could escape to a foreign port, with news of the King's death, and a message for Stanley to cross, with his Swiss and Irish companies, into the Thames. Parliament was to meet on Tuesday, November 5; a day, as Catesby thought, to be ever glorious in the calendar of his Church. Excepting Percy, the chiefs were now in London, waiting for that Tuesday to arrive. Father Robarts had been stationed in Vinegar House, under the care of Mrs. Gibbins. Catesby was at White Webbs. Fawkes returned to Butcher Row for two or three nights. Tom Winter was in Montagu Close. Jack Wright was at the Horse Ferry, Lambeth. Cousin Frank was in Clerkenwell. Rokewood, Kay, and Kit Wright were lodging at St. Giles' Fields, in the house of Mrs. More. When Percy came to town, he was to stay with his friends, Rokewood and Kay, in their lodgings at Mrs. More's. Fawkes, who was now become the nearest of Catesby's comrades, spent most of his time secreted at Enfield Chase. All things were prepared; and all things, down to the inscriptions on their swords, in what the conspirators conceived to be a religious spirit. Rokewood had employed a cutler named Cradock to make three sword-hilts, on each of which he was to engrave the Passion of Christ. These swords were for himself, Kit Wright, and Kay. Their chief, though he ordered no such hilt for himself, was so much interested in the work that he called very often at Cradock's shop to see what progress he had made.

A fancy sword was not the thing of which Catesby stood in most pressing need. He wanted money, and he wanted men. The absence of Prince Henry crossed his plans; and the means of seizing that Prince at the moment of explosion were now beyond their reach. His scheme was falling into chaos. Cousin Frank, too, was suspected by him more and more. Frank had not yet supplied the whole of his two thousand pounds, and his general conduct had been so strange of late, that Catesby, though he loved him dearly, had more than once thought of soothing his jealous rage by plunging the dagger into his heart.

In truth, the Frank Tresham who had played with him as a boy, and who had sworn the oath to keep his secret, was not the Mr. Tresham with whom he had now to deal. A serious change had come. His sworn companion was not the rich Northampton squire, for his father, Sir Thomas, had been then alive; but while the penitents were walking bare-legged to St. Winifred's Well, Sir Thomas had passed away, and Frank had been left the master of Rushton Hall, with one of the best estates in the midland shires. Then only he saw the error of his way, for what he had done in taking the oath of secrecy put this large estate in peril, and Mr. Tresham was suspected by his desperate kinsman of a design to undo what cousin Frank had done.

This task of undoing what he had done was not easy for Mr. Tresham, since the payments which he had made under his first rash promise had put him equally into Catesby's power and into Cecil's power. As a conspirator—guilty of compassing the King's death—his life and fortune were at stake, and one word from his disdainful cousin would send him, a ruined traitor, to the Tower. How far Cecil and Northampton were acquainted with the plot he shrewdly guessed; for any man who watched the Secretary's action, with the clue in his hand, could hardly help seeing that the Government knew as much as they cared to learn.

A man must have been ignorant of Cecil and Northampton in no common measure who could have dreamed that a secret which was known to a hundred persons in Douai, Madrid, and Rome—that a design which had been nursed at White Webbs and carried out in Parliament Place—could have escaped the greatest masters of intrigue alive. Many of the court papers have been burnt, yet enough remains to show that the Council were informed of the plot in almost every stage. Tilletson had told them of the design to cut off the King and his progeny. Southwick, one of their priestly spies in France, had sent them news of everything done by the Jesuits, and the name of every Jesuit who crossed the sea into Kent. Wilson wrote to them from Valladolid that the Jesuits were to try once more what they had tried in the Queen's time, and that the King and Prince were to be killed. The matter was so far known as to be made a subject of negotiation with the Papal Nuncio in Paris, who proposed to guarantee the King's personal safety on condition of his suspending the penal laws and granting freedom of the mass. A sorcerer named Wright, a spy named Williams, an informer named Coe, sent warnings to Cecil, whose agents were in Enfield Chase, in Warwick, in Stratford, in Dunchurch,—following the Jesuits from mass to funeral, from pilgrimage to hunt—counting their numbers, marking their proselytes—mapping out their haunts.

It was no part of Cecil's policy to step in one hour before the dramatic time. He knew the value of a plot too well to sacrifice the chances which Garnet and Catesby were throwing into his path. A sudden surprise, a chase of malefactors, an arrest of Catholic peers, with a state trial, and an execution of Jesuits, would make his peace with a patriotic House of Commons, and secure to him the confidence and gratitude of James. The King was vain enough to think that he was personally a favourite of Heaven, and he wished the world to see that he was really protected from above. He wanted a day to be set apart in the calendar to his glory; and he had tried to get his Council to adopt the fifth of August, the date of the Gowrie Plot, as his sacred day. The thing could not be done; for the Council knew that the King's escape from Ruthven had produced only a slight—and not in any sense a dramatic—shock of the public mind. The Scots themselves made a comedy of the day in Perth; and even those among his courtiers who thought he had been in danger, smiled at the affair as a personal feud in a provincial town. But a conspiracy in London, managed by the Jesuits, and threatening a hundred lives, would serve his weakness well, if it could be only watched and turned so as to keep the actual peril far from his throat and crown. If all went well, the King might write his name in the calendar on a day to be called his own.

But Cecil and Northampton had other purposes in view. They had to convince the Duke de Lerma that they and their party in the Council were the only agents at the English court whom it would be worth his while to employ in carrying out the policy of Spain. Philip, a fanatic in creed, was still inclined to trust the Jesuits; and it was necessary that these Jesuits should be swept away.

Measures of precaution had been taken long ago, and nothing less than the blindness which afflicts all criminals could have hidden from Catesby and Percy the movements made to defeat their game. During the summer and autumn months sharp eyes would have noticed an unusual stir among the train-bands. The musters had been called, the companies strengthened, and the arms inspected, in every shire. The Lord Lieutenants of counties had been asked to see after this great work in person; while in the shires which had no such officers, the most able member of the Privy Council had been charged with the task. If Spinola had been menacing Kent, the preparations could hardly have been more complete. Much and wise attention had been given to the bands in Warwickshire; Lord Compton, the King's Lieutenant, receiving sharp commands from Whitehall to hold reviews of men and arms, and to see for himself that both were in readiness to take the field. Edmund Nicholson, the famous armourer, was sent from London with a supply of guns and pikes for these Warwickshire bands, some of whom were then being drilled in the fields near Norbrook. Father Southwick was sent for out of France to help in hunting down the Jesuits; and Cecil, remembering the Essex rising and the Blackfriars play, shut up the theatres and confined the comedians to their homes.

On the very day of Catesby's arrival at White Webbs, Father Southwick was in consultation with Cecil's secretary, Levinus Munck.

The incidents through which the plot was brought to light bear traces throughout of Cecil's art.

On Saturday afternoon, October 26th, Monteagle, who lived in Montagu Close, near the Globe Theatre, sent a messenger to his place in Hoxton (probably Brooke House), with orders to prepare his supper, as he meant to come out with a friend that night. The friend who rode out with him to Hoxton was Thomas Ward, a gentleman of his household, who was also a friend of Winter and an unsworn member of the plot. As the peer and his man were sitting down to sup, a page came into the room with a letter in his hand, which had been given to him, he said, by a strange man in the lane, who bade him give it to his lord and to no one else. Monteagle broke the seal and tossed the paper to Ward, who read it out aloud. The words were vague enough, but they warned Monteagle, as he valued his life, to go into the country instead of going to the Parliament House, as God and man had concurred to punish the wickedness of the times by a "terrible blow." Pages, servants, all his household, heard these menacing words, which Monteagle's conduct made more menacing still. He rose from table, called for his horse and rode away to town.

About ten o'clock that Saturday night, he dashed into Whitehall Yard, and ran upstairs into Cecil's private room, where he found a curious group for him to meet by chance on such a night; four Catholic Earls, whom James had now taken into his Council; Nottingham, Northampton, Suffolk, and Worcester; all of whom had come into Cecil's room to sup. Ten-o'clock suppers were rather late; but the five lords were in no hurry; and the letter which had been left at Monteagle's door in Hoxton by the unknown man was read aloud to them ere they sat down to eat. At table they agreed to keep their secret, as the King, who was hunting deer at Royston, was daily expected back in town.

On Sunday morning the game was wholly in Cecil's hands, but the player was too crafty to show his cards. One of Catesby's crazes was that Cecil was a fool; and Cecil, taking care that his victims should not be alarmed one hour too soon, so veiled his action that Catesby could neither carry out his plan nor save himself by flight. Levinus Munck, his private secretary, sent for Father Southwick, who was to take horse and ride down into the country, where he was to say little and to see much; running the Jesuit agents to their holes, and marking the cover, so that Munck could issue the warrants and throw them into jail whenever his master pleased. Northampton sent for Sir Thomas Knyvet, a connection of Lady Suffolk, and a man whom he could trust. Knyvet, warder of the mint, and a Justice of the Peace for Westminster, was to prepare for a sudden and secret service to the Crown, for which in time he might expect to receive a great reward. He was to make a search and seizure for the King, which could be more conveniently made by a Justice of the Peace than by a captain of the guard.

Monteagle, having interests in the plot beyond those of Cecil, to whom it was a work of political art, and not a personal peril, was of all things anxious that Catesby should escape unhurt. But he could not act in person. Though his peace was made with Cecil, it would never do for him to be known as giving a conspirator the advice and the means to fly. He spoke to Ward, of whom he had a great conceit; and on Sunday night, as Winter lay in bed, Ward went to his bedside and told him all; describing the letter left in Hoxton lane, the public reading in the hall, the ride to London, the interview of Monteagle with the five lords; and urging him, as he loved Catesby, to ride over in the morning to White Webbs, and force him to take the boat for France.

At dawn on Monday, Winter left Montagu Close in search of Father Oldcorne and Jack Wright; and when he found them in their lodgings, they rode together to White Webbs with their doleful news. Catesby reeled beneath the blow, but his spirits soon leapt proudly up. Tom begged him to save himself, since he could no longer hope to serve his God. But Catesby would not hear of flight. He could not think their secret was betrayed. A fancy seized him that the news sent down by Ward was all a trick, devised by his cousin Frank to drive him off. He would look farther into things than Tom saw need. The mine should be examined; for if Cecil had received such a letter from Monteagle, his very first care must have been to inspect the vault. Fawkes should go up to town and see. Winter urged the peril, to which Catesby answered that the vault was Fawkes' post, and that they need not tell him why he was sent in. Tuesday was spent in these debates, during which the servant James was told to look after their geldings, and buy what was wanted in Enfield town; anything to keep him from the house.

On Wednesday morning Fawkes rode up to town, and opening the door into the vaults, found everything as he had left it, down to the private mark which he had placed to show whether any one had passed the door. That night he rode back to Enfield Chase, where the conspirators received his tidings with gladsome hearts. On Thursday, Winter rode into town in search of Tresham, and finding him in Clerkenwell, proposed, in Catesby's name, that they should meet next day in Barnet to confer upon their course. Catesby, who knew his cousin capable of trick, could not believe him capable of treachery; but he had so far steeled his heart against him, that if they found him false, he told Tom Winter they must stab him on the spot.

CHAPTER LI.

NOVEMBER, 1605.

ON Friday, November 1st, Catesby and Tom rode over to Barnet, where Tresham came out from Clerkenwell to meet them. Catesby bluntly accused his cousin of having broken his oath and betrayed the secret. How? asked Frank in an injured tone. By writing that letter which was left by the unknown messenger at Monteagle's door. It was a critical moment for cousin Frank. If he had paused in his reply, the daggers of his comrades would have passed into his flesh; but he denied the charge with so much heat and scorn, that they were staggered and knew not how to treat him. Tresham was a pupil of the Jesuits; he held that lying and deceit were lawful in a good cause; and Garnet's treatise on Equivocation was known to be his favourite book; but they could not bring themselves to believe that he would palter with an oath on the Primer, especially when that oath had been sworn for ends which his Jesuit teachers had at heart.

Frank made no secret of his opinion that the plot had failed; that everything was known to Cecil and Northampton; that his cousin was in peril and ought to fly; but he was not the less ready, in Catesby's presence, and under the spell of his haughty spirit, to pledge his soul that, if his cousin elected to stand his ground and wait events, he would live and die at

Catesby's side. Perplexed in soul, the proud young squire could not consent to desert his post. Percy was still in the North, collecting rents on the Earl's estate; and Catesby would not hear of any change being made in their plans until that gentleman arrived in town. But if he could not fly, how could he leave his suspicious friend at large? A test of Frank's sincerity occurred to him:—he asked his cousin for two hundred pounds, to be spent in buying horses, arms, and powder. If Frank had made his peace with Cecil, he would not dare to compromise himself afresh; he would refuse to pay the money; and then they would know with whom they had to deal. A poniard thrust would make him safe. If he paid the two hundred pounds, he would be with them for life and death.

Frank promised them at once. He did so, as he afterwards declared, in the hope that when Catesby got the money he would leave the country. He appointed to meet Tom Winter that very night in Clerkenwell, and put the gold into his hands.

Tom went to Clerkenwell, where Tresham paid him a hundred pounds; perhaps thinking that, if Catesby meant to go away, that sum was quite enough; but Tom was urgent for the balance; and Tresham, though he hoped to see no more of Tom, arranged to meet him the very next night in Lincoln's Inn Walk, whither he would bring the second of his two hundred pounds.

Catesby spent the Saturday (November 2) in buying arms. In the evening, Winter was at his post near Lincoln's Inn, to which Tresham came in the dark, with a very sore spirit and a bag of gold containing ninety pounds, the largest sum that he could raise in so short a time. Winter took his money and heard his speeches. More than ever Frank felt certain that the plot was known, and once again he urged on Tom that Catesby should escape into France. He had a yacht in the river, and this vessel he was willing to lend them, if they would only fly.

On Sunday morning (November 3) Ward paid another visit to Winter's room. The news he brought was graver, in his own opinion, than the first. The King, he said, was come to town, and having seen the Monteagle letter, was deeply moved by it, though he had urged the lords of his Council to maintain the strictest silence on the subject. Search, said Ward, was to be made immediately in the vaults of Parliament Place, particularly in the passages and chambers beneath the throne, and everything they had done would now be found.

Winter repaired to White Webbs with this bad news; but Catesby, though he listened to every word in fever, could not stoop to personal fear. No doubt, he reasoned, the letter would lead to search being made; but search was not discovery; and if Fawkes were on the spot, the heap of wood and coal might pass for what it seemed. While they were whispering to each other, Percy came to White Webbs, and this man's scorn of flight and failure overcame all previous doubts.

Percy had just arrived in town, where he hoped to hide himself at Rokewood's lodgings in St. Giles's Fields. He had with him a large sum of money, belonging to the Earl, his kinsman, for which he had immediate use; but feeling that to be in town without reporting himself at Sion was a dangerous thing, he sent Kit Wright to Isleworth, to mix with the grooms and pages, and to learn from them whether his arrival in London was known in the household. Late in the night, Kit brought him word to Mrs. More's lodgings that his presence in London was known at Sion, in consequence of which it was resolved that he should go up the river next day and see the Earl.

Breaking up their conference at White Webbs, the conspirators rode back to town on Sunday evening; Fawkes to go down at once to Vinegar House, where he noticed that the mine was still untouched; the rest to steal about the streets, from Parliament Place to Whitehall Gardens, where they found, to their amazement, everything dull and quiet as on ordinary winter nights. No stir at the gate—no torches in the court—no tramp of men in Parliament Place! Relieved in mind by what they saw, they crept at last to their lodgings in St. Giles's Fields, and waited for the dawn.

On Monday morning (November 4), they heard from Fawkes that all was well at Vinegar House. Who could now say their secret was known at court? To-day was the King's; to-morrow would be theirs. If Winter was a little down, Catesby and Percy were elate and proud. What cause had they for drooping of the spirit? Their mine was perfect and their man resolved. In less than thirty hours their fate would be accomplished; the House of Lords a wreck, the King a cinder, the City stunned, the country helpless, and the crown their prize. Percy ran out and bought a watch, which he set in true time and sent to Fawkes, so that the watcher in the vault would be able to count the very seconds which their enemies had now to live. Greenway and Oldcorne had left for the country with good news; the first for Goathurst and Coughton, the second for Hendlip Hall. Robarts was at Vinegar House. The final words were now passed from each man to his fellow, and the plotters parted for the day; each going to his post of duty, confident that the mine would now be sprung. Percy went off to Sion, where the Earl detained him to dine and sup. Tom Winter returned to Montagu Close. Rokewood and Kay remained in St. Giles's Fields, near stables in which Rokewood's horses stood, with the harness ready on their backs. Catesby and Jack Wright rode out quietly to Enfield Chase, where they proposed to sleep, and trot on early next day towards Dunchurch, in the hope of reaching their rendezvous that night.

The plotters were hardly separated before a strange event occurred in Parliament Place. Lord Suffolk and Lord Monteagle came to Vinegar House, attended by a page, and passed into the vaults under the Prince's chamber and the House of Lords. Suffolk was the Lord Chamberlain, and both the peers were members of the persecuted Church. No guards came with them, and they seemed to be light of mood, as though they were going through an idle form of search. Fawkes was in the vault, and watched their faces well. As they walked along the passages, they laughed and chatted with each other, and when Suffolk noticed Fawkes in the vault, he asked him in a light tone who he was, and whose was the heap of wood and coal. Fawkes answered that he was Mr. Percy's man, and that the fuel was laid up for his master's use. Lord Suffolk made some joke about his merry preparation for the Christmas fires, and then the two lords went their way. The search being over, Fawkes came out to let Percy know of the event, which had at once confirmed and removed his fears. Percy had not come back from Sion; but the upshot of this official search was so important that Fawkes took horse and followed him to Isleworth, where he was sitting at table with the Earl. Percy came out into the yard, and having heard the news, went in again, made some excuse to Northumberland, and rode with Fawkes to town.

The two men parted for the last time near Tothill Fields; Fawkes going down into the vault to draw on his jack-boots, to wind up his watch, and to light his lantern; Percy riding to Rokewood's lodging, where he had a room, to persuade his comrades who were still in town that all was now going well.

About ten o'clock in the murky November night, Rokewood, Kay, and Percy crept from St. Giles's Fields into King Street, near the palace gates, to see and hear the news. Nothing they could see and hear alarmed them. The palace gates were open and the court was free. Parliament Place was silent. In the streets of Westminster not a sound of watch and guard was heard. In the palace, a light burned faintly here and there, as if some page were rather late; but the windows in the King's apartments were dark, and the lords who had supped with him appeared to have gone to bed. Looking at the blank walls and silent courts of the royal quarter, could any man believe that James was conscious of what the morrow had in store?

When the clocks struck twelve, and yet no sign was made, the three night-watchers crawled past Charing Cross, up St. Martin's Lane, towards their lodgings in the lonely St. Giles's Fields, convinced in their hearts that long before noon next day the deed would be done that was to shake the world.

But while they were creeping through the darkness to their den, the spring had been made, and Fawkes was a prisoner to the law.

The train being laid and the lantern lit, Fawkes was coming up the stairs of his vault into the small enclosed court behind the Prince's chamber, when he was suddenly seized by strong men, bound hands and feet, and searched. Sir Thomas Knyvet was earning his reward. The watch which he had just wound up, a packet of slow matches, a quantity of touchwood, were taken from his person; and a dark lantern, with the wick alight, was found behind the cellar-door. "What are you doing here?" asked Knyvet. "Had you but taken me inside," said Fawkes, who saw with a soldier's quickness that all was lost, "I should have blown you up, the house, myself, and all." Securing his prisoner, Knyvet proceeded to search the vault. The casks of powder were soon laid bare, and a rough account of them set down. From the cellars he went into Vinegar House, where he arrested Gibbins the porter, and Robarts the priest.

In a few minutes, Knyvet was in the King's presence at Whitehall; and in a few months, he was a member of that House of Lords the frame of which he had so boldly saved.

CHAPTER LII.

HUNTED DOWN.

BETIMES on Tuesday morning Catesby and Jack Wright were in the saddle, winding through Enfield Chase towards Ashby St. Leger, which they meant to reach that night by easy stages, unaware that Knyvet had got possession of their mine, and that Fawkes was lying on his wisp of straw in the darkest dungeon of the Tower.

The plotters in St. Giles's Fields were roused in the night by news that Fawkes had been seized in the vault, and some of them crept into the streets to learn whether this report was true. Kit Wright ran off to Montagu Close, expecting to find Tom Winter, who had gone away to his lodgings near the Strand. But in the Close he heard a cry and parley which turned him sick with fear. A noble lord was calling under Monteagle's window, "Rise! and come with me to Essex House! I am going to call up my Lord of Northumberland!" Kit listened to what was said, and from the hasty words then dropped he learned that all was known. At five o'clock he found Winter in his lodgings near the Strand, and told him what he had heard under Monteagle's window. Tom leapt out of bed. "Go back, Mr. Wright," he begged, "and learn what you can about Essex Gate." In a short time Kit returned, saying surely all was known; for the lords were then with the Earl in council, and one Leyton had just ridden at full speed from the door. The business seemed high and pressing, for the lords came out to see him off. He had dashed up Fleet Street. "Go you then to Mr. Percy," whispered Tom; "for sure it is for him they seek. Bid him be gone. I will stay and see the uttermost." They parted at the door. Kit found his comrade Percy in the street; a word sufficed to warn him; and the two men leapt to horse, and rode away through Highgate, with the cry of mounting messengers in their track.

Percy had arranged his plans for leaving town, in case of failure, with such cunning art, that for many hours the Government were uncertain in what direction he had fled. A messenger was sent to Ware, as Cecil inferred that he would take the great North road; but the postmaster replied that he had not passed since Saturday, when he came up to town. The first news heard by Cecil was from Archbishop Bancroft, who reported that Percy had been met that morning near Croydon, where he cried, as he rode along, that all London was up in arms. The next news came from the Lord Chief Justice Popham, who reported that Percy was at Gravesend, where measures had been taken for his arrest. Later in the day, Sir William Waad, Lieutenant of the Tower, sent word to Whitehall that Sir Edward Yorke, in coming up to town that day, had seen him riding northward in disguise.

Winter passed down the Strand into Whitehall Yard, where he found the gates were closed and guarded, and thence down King Street on his way to Parliament Place. The street was stopped, and soldiers were drawn across the road. No one was allowed to pass. Mixing with the crowd, he heard that a plot had been discovered for blowing up the King and Queen next day, and that the ruffian who was to have fired the train had been captured with his lantern and his match. Why need he wait for more?

Stealing swiftly to the stables where his gelding lay, Tom jumped into the saddle, and quitted London by the nearest lanes; not for the rendezvous at Ashby St. Leger, but for what he hoped would be the safer asylum of his brother's house.

Kay hung about town until ten o'clock, and then took horse.

Young Rokewood was the last to fly. Proud of his great stud and his greater prowess, the Suffolk squire had placed relays of horses on the road from London to Dunchurch, so that when he rode down to the hunting-party he could devour the distance with amazing speed. Mounting his horse at eleven o'clock, he soon came up with his comrades on the road. At Finchley Common he overtook Kay, whence they tore on together, until Kay, getting tired of his pace, fell off. Near Brickhill he overtook Catesby and Jack Wright, who had not yet heard the news; and a piece beyond Fenny Stratford they met with Percy and Kit Wright. From this village they held on together, pushing past Stony Stratford and Towcester at their utmost speed. Percy and Jack Wright, less nobly mounted than their fellows, had to cast away their cloaks in that furious race for life.

In two hours Rokewood rode thirty miles on a single horse, and made the whole distance of eighty-one miles in less than seven hours.

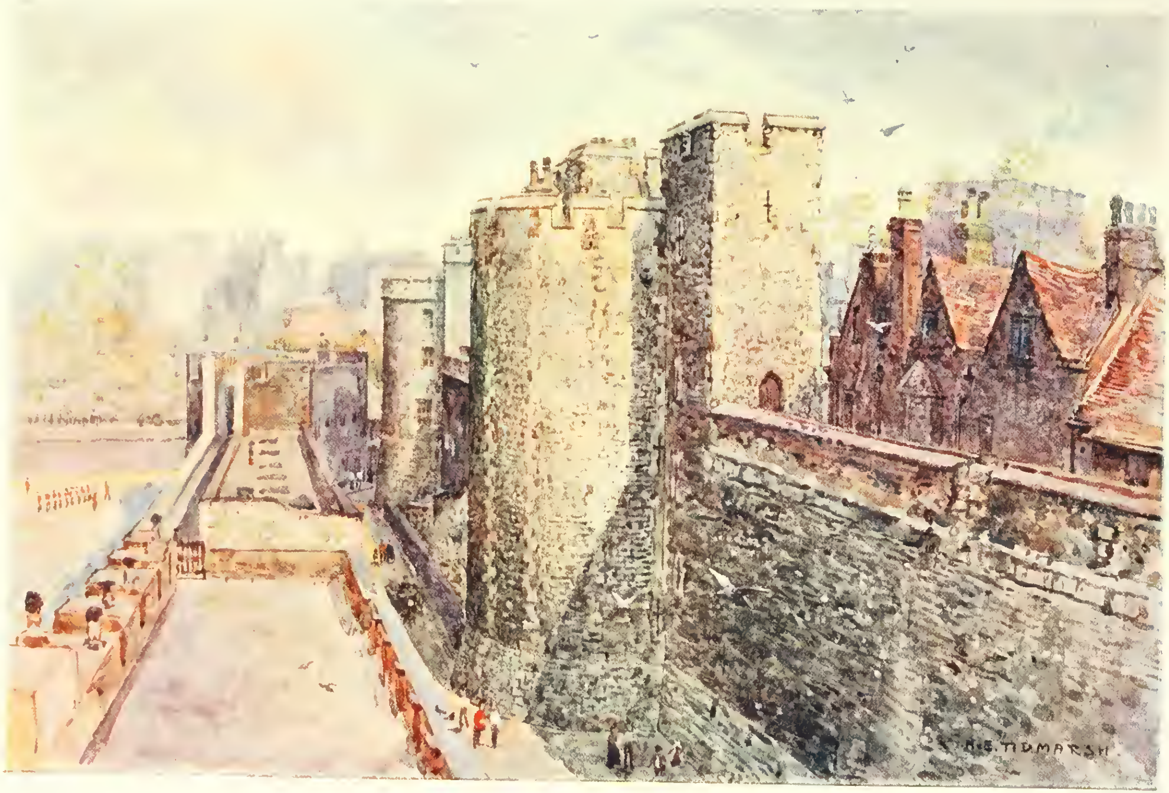
Unconscious of the fate then speeding towards them through the dark November night, two companies of country squires were waiting at Ashby St. Leger and Dunchurch in a riotous mood of mind. News having come down that the mine was safe and all going well at Westminster, Digby left his wife, his priest, and the two ladies on Sunday morning safe at Coughton, and came to Dunchurch with various gentlemen ready for the chase. The word was passed round the shires, and men were hurrying from every side towards the rendezvous. Robert Winter left his house near

Worcester, and trotting hard all day, arrived in Grafton, where his wife's father, John Talbot, a rich old Catholic squire, then lived. The Littletons, leaving Hagley at the same moment, met Winter on Monday night in Coventry, where they slept at an inn. Next day, the fifth of November, they pricked forward to Dunchurch, where they found Sir Robert Digby of Coleshill and a strong muster of Catholic squires and their men, mounted on strong horses and armed with guns and pikes. The Littletons put up their horses and joined their friends in the village, while Winter rode on to Ashby, where he expected in a few hours to see his chief and receive the word to march. Ashby was full of guests, and Lady Catesby was just sitting down with them to supper at six o'clock, when a clatter of hoofs was heard in the court, and a moment later her son himself dashed in among them, white with passion and begrimed with dirt.

One word told all that there was left to tell.

Snatching down sword and lance from the baronial hall, the gentlemen rushed towards the stables, mounted their geldings in the dark, and made for Dunchurch, to see their comrades and resolve on what should now be done. The coming of Catesby in such a style threw everything ajar; and when the country gentlemen saw Digby and Catesby talking apart in eager tremulous tones, they felt sure that the scheme had failed, that the Government was master, and that the time had come for them to fly. Sir Robert Digby left. Humphrey Littleton also left. By twos and threes the company thinned as the minutes waned, until, about nine o'clock, the army of Dunchurch was found to consist of few beyond those who had been sworn accomplices in the plot.

Fierce was the speech, insane the counsel, offered at Dunchurch that night; but Catesby's overpowering spirit at length compelled them to decide. Fawkes being taken prisoner, they had to count on his telling


H.E. TIDMARSH

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7 BEAUCHAMP TOWER, FROM THE BELL TOWER.

—under torture—what he knew. Their lives were forfeit to the law; and none but madmen could expect the King to overlook their crime. If they wished to live, they must strike for life. One chance was left them; an appeal to the Catholic people! Let the cry be raised. In Warwickshire they could not hold their ground; but Wales, in which they had recently invoked a powerful saint, lay open to their arms. Wales was sternly Catholic in creed. The country was difficult, the population warlike; and a religious war would feed itself on every passion of the Cymric heart.

Catesby's counsel being adopted, the meeting broke up about ten o'clock, and the company got on the road for Norbrook, which they reached in the dead of night, and rested their geldings for an hour. Digby snatched a pen and wrote a line to tell Garnet that the mine had failed, to ask his advice, and to beg that he would meet them at Robert Winter's house. Bates was sent with this note to Coughton, that he, as one sworn to the secret, might urge the good Father not to abandon them in their hour of need. Then, mounting once more, the band pushed forward in the early dawn towards Alcaster and Huddington, which they reached about two o'clock in the afternoon. Tom Winter had just come in. They were weaker in force than when they left Norbrook, for no one joined them on the road, and some of their stragglers had dropped behind. The country was rising round them on every side. In every stable from which they stole a horse, in every shop from which they snatched a gun, they raised up swarms of enemies. Men of all classes were on their track; the sheriffs of Worcester and Warwick being well prepared for such a chase by the recene musters and their admirable drill. How were they to turn unless the Jesuits came?

A scene occurred at Coughton Hall. When Bates dashed up to the door, he found the Prefect in the hall, and gave him hastily his note. As Garnet opened the paper, Greenway came in, and asked him what the matter was. Garnet read the letter aloud, on which Greenway exclaimed, "Here is no tarrying for you and me." Bates begged that one of the Fathers at least would ride across to Huddington and comfort his young master. "I would go to him," said Greenway, "though it were to a thousand deaths; but my going would destroy the Society." Bates begged that they would come, and come at once. Then the two Jesuits stood apart, consulting in whispers for half an hour, at the end of which Greenway came out into the open air, attired in a suit of rich-coloured satin, covered with gold lace, and a horse being brought round from the stable, he got on his back and accompanied Bates to Robert Winter's house.

The interview between Greenway and Catesby was in private. When it was over, Greenway took horse and rode away to Hendlip Hall. When the priest was gone away from them, Catesby called his companions, Rokewood, Percy, Morgan, and the rest, and begged of them to confess their sins, and make up their souls for death. Father Hart, a Jesuit living in Winter's house, received them one by one in his closet, and having heard the story of their crime, absolved them without a word.

The thing had to be done in haste, for Catesby was convinced that the hour was nigh when they must either die like soldiers or hang like dogs.

The confession over and the absolution given, they took to horse once more, going straight up North through Stourbridge to Stephen Littleton's house at Holbeach in Staffordshire, where Catesby had a mind to make his stand and die, as he had lived, in conflict with the law.

Having crossed the borders of a county, he supposed that his friends were safe from pursuit for a few hours, while the next sheriff and his bands were getting ready; and as much of their powder had been soaked in crossing a river, he asked Morgan, Grant, and Rokewood to assist him in the dangerous task of drying it before the kitchen fire. An accident ensued. A live coal fell into the platter on which the powder was spread—an explosion took place—and the four conspirators were blown off their seats and their faces blackened and burned. A bag of powder, big enough to have burst a castle, was carried through the roof unsinged. Yet the four men were so scorched and burnt, that when their comrades came into the kitchen, they shrank from the black and ghastly figures as from so many imps. A weak and superstitious fellow, Littleton stole away from his house in the night; and when morning dawned, the servants saw that Sir Everard and Robert Winter were also gone. Bates followed them; and then the bolder spirits of the plot were left alone. Tom Winter, stirring early, met Stephen Littleton, who told him Catesby was dead, and urged him to save his life by flight. "First, I will go and bury the body of our friend," said Tom; on hearing which, Littleton slipped from the yard and left his house. When Winter found the spectres, he asked them what they would do? "We mean to die here," they answered in their pain. "What you do, I do," said the faithful Tom.

About eleven o'clock, Sir Richard Walsh and his company beset the house, and began to fire into the court. Tom Winter was the first to fall, though his wound was not mortal. Jack Wright was then shot dead, and after him fell Kit his brother. Then the assailants broke into the court, and Rokewood, shot already in the arm, was pierced in the body by a lance. "Stand by me, Mr. Tom," cried Catesby, "and we will die together." Tom was too much hurt to stand. "Sir," he said, respectful to the last, "I have lost the use of my right arm, and I fear that will cause me to be taken." One shot struck Percy and Catesby down, a shot that won a pension from King James, and then the fight was over and the house secured.

Rokewood and Winter, Morgan and Grant, were taken prisoners. Catesby and Percy stood in sore need of help; but the only aid they could get from man was such as added to the pangs of death: for, while the sheriff was securing his prisoners and searching the house, the boors of the Black country swarmed into the court, and finding the wounded men lying on the ground, they stripped them stark naked—stole their clothes and ornaments—exposed their gashes to the air—and caused them to expire in the accumulating agonies of bleeding, thirst, and frost.

CHAPTER LIII.

IN THE TOWER.

IN less than a week from the assault of Holbeach House, the laymen of the plot were either dead or in the Tower. Catesby, Percy, Jack and Kit Wright, were buried near the spot where they had fallen; but, by Northampton's orders, they were dug up from the earth and hung. Fawkes, Rokewood, Kay, Tom Winter, Stephen Littleton, Digby, Tresham, Bates, and Robert Winter were dispersed in the several prisons under charge of Waad, who brought them one by one before Northampton and the Lords Commissioners sitting in the Powder Plot Room.

Their lives were clearly forfeit to the law, and Cecil knew that he could hang them all without incurring the reproach of dealing hardly with their Church.

The news of this plot was heard by the old English Catholics with more astonishment than rage, though the expression of their anger was both loud and deep. The priests were still more prompt to denounce it than their flocks. The venerable archpriest, George Blackwell, took up his pen before a single man had yet been killed or captured in the shires, and in a brief address to the Catholic clergy stigmatised the plot as a detestable contrivance, in which no true Catholic could have a share; as an abominable thing, contrary to Holy Writ, to the decrees of Councils, and to the instructions of their spiritual guides. Blackwell told his clergy to exhort their flocks to peace and obedience, and to avoid falling into snares.

While Blackwell was composing his letter, Ben Jonson, the poet, was standing in the Council chamber of Whitehall, denouncing the plot on behalf of his fellow-laymen, and offering his personal service in pursuing the gangs who had brought destruction on his Church. The poet was then about thirty years of age; for seven years he had been a Catholic; but he was a Catholic of the old English school; a pupil of St. Edward, not of St. Ignatius; and the part which he proposed to play in this drama was in keeping with his character and his creed. In his youth he had fought against Philip in the Low Countries, and after his conversion to Rome he had remained an enemy of the Jesuits and of Spain. A crime like that proposed by Catesby was one to fire his turbulent and generous veins with fury; crime in the name of religion, murder in the cause of God! He went down to Whitehall, had a talk with Cecil, and on a blank form being given to him, he undertook to find an honest priest who could help in running the conspirators to earth. A form being placed in his hands, he went off to the Venetian embassy, where he reckoned on finding the Catholic chaplain eager to assist him in his search; and he was right in his belief: for that chaplain told him he had come on a good service, one in which a man of conscience, who loved his country, must heartily engage. The chaplain, a foreigner, said he would seek out an English priest, who knew the Jesuits and their haunts, and would bring him to Cecil's chamber at Whitehall. But the poet's project led to nothing; for the priests, alarmed by the popular rage, which took no note of the difference between the children of St. Edward and the pupils of St. Ignatius, dared not come forth into the light. Ben's indignation was extreme; and he wrote to tell Cecil that the shame was so deep among the Catholics, that five hundred gentlemen would abandon their religion in a week.

The Council could hang the prisoners without reproach, and great would be the gains accruing from their death. The Puritan towns would be delighted, and the Puritan burgesses more pliant to the crown. The King could get his name into the calendar and the service-books. But Cecil and Northampton had other purposes in mind. They wished not only to discredit and destroy the Jesuit agency in England, but to cripple still more the partisans of war by ruining the powerful Earl who was now their chief.

Week after week passed by, and the prisoners were not tried for their offence. In fact, they were undergoing a course of daily trial by Northampton in the Tower. Here they underwent a thousand interrogatories from Coke, a thousand hostilities from Waad, and a thousand treacheries from Forsett. This Forsett was one of Northampton's spies, a useful and despicable wretch, whom his master employed in over-hearing and reporting the private conversations of prisoners with each other. Cecil's object in allowing these proceedings was, not to obtain a knowledge of Jesuit complicity in the plot, but evidence which could be adduced in a court of law.

The prisoners had a conscience in the matter of a curious kind; for long after they had taken to accusing each other in their confessions they continued to screen their priests. Both Fawkes and Winter affirmed that when they took that oath on the Primer in Butcher Row, Father Gerard, who gave them the sacrament, was ignorant of the purpose of their oath. The names of Garnet, Greenway, Oldcorne, never passed their lips. But the object of their lying words and lying silence was to screen their persons, not to clear their fame. Of Father Owen they spoke quite freely; for Owen was beyond the reach of English law.

Though Cecil was an artist in deceit, he was amazed by the complexity of lying which he had now to study. Sir Everard Digby seemed on the whole, apart from his share in the plot, a man of honourable mind; yet Digby, while a prisoner in the Tower, considered himself free to say and to unsay, from hour to hour. He told his questioners that he was not sworn; that he went to Dunchurch for the hunt and nothing more; that he was only with the band two days in all; that he quitted them of his own free will. Next day, on Fawkes being set before him face to face, the poor young fellow told some part of the truth, and justified his former course of lies. He wrote to his wife a flood of letters and a stock of doggrel rhymes. "If I had thought there had been the least sin in it" (the scheme of wholesale murder), "I would not have been in it for all the world." Digby had been taught that assassination, in a certain cause, was not a sin; that a false statement, in a certain cause, was not a lie.

Fawkes was pressed more closely for confessions against the Catholic peers; and mainly on his avowals, the Earl of Northumberland, Lord Montagu, Lord Stourton, and Lord Mordaunt were brought into the Tower.

Tresham was the greatest mystery of all. For many days after Catesby's flight, cousin Frank remained in London, going about the streets as usual, and even offering to assist the Council in seeking out the fugitives. Fawkes mentioned him as one of the sworn confederates; yet for one whole week he was left at large; and it is evident from his ways of life that he felt no fear of being arrested. At length he was committed to the Tower; and Sir Thomas Lake, the King's private secretary, considering him as a lost man, applied for a grant of Pipewell manor, one of his estates, which James assured him he should have when it was forfeited to the crown! He made a cautious statement, saying he had seen Catesby and

Winter, and had given them money, but was not a member of the plot, and had only paid the money in order to tempt his cousin to cross the seas. He seemed to know that the Council were bent on saving Lord Monteagle, and he fancied that Monteagle could not be saved unless he himself were spared. Monteagle's name appeared in all the chief confessions, but a tiny slip of paper was pasted over this name in every document that would have to be produced in court.

Tom Winter, in the ample declarations which he made in the Tower, described his mission into Spain, and mentioned the names of Tresham, Catesby, Lord Monteagle, and Father Greenway as the men who sent him to Madrid. Greenway was known to have escaped, and Tom had therefore no concern to hide his share in the plots conducted from Enfield Chase; but he manfully refrained from saying one word that could have clouded Garnet's fame. Tresham was much more frank. He said that Father Garnet, as well as Father Greenway, had been present at their meetings in Enfield Chase, and was only too well acquainted with the mission into Spain.

The art of lying was a favourite subject of study to cousin Frank, in whose house were found two treatises on the art: one, in favour of equivocation, by Father Garnet; the other, against equivocation, by Father Blackwell. The Jesuit's convert, following the Jesuit's rule, betrayed, without a kiss, the master from whom he had learnt his art.

A few days after Frank gave his evidence against the Prefect he was reported sick; on which his wife, Ann Tresham, applied for leave to attend him in his cell, along with her old servant William Vavasour, an admirable scribe, who could write in many differing styles. Mrs. Tresham, a woman of the Dacre mint, procured from the sick man a paper, purporting to be a full denial of his former charge against the Jesuit. A singular production was this paper. It began by saying that the man who signed it had been guilty of an infamous falsehood; it went on to say that he was now about to tell the truth—on his salvation; it then asserted that Frank Tresham had not seen Father Garnet for sixteen years—had never heard from him in all these years—and had no knowledge of his being privy to the mission into Spain! The form was no less curious than the contents. Not being written in Tresham's hand, some evidence was wanting to prove it his. Mrs. Tresham said it was in her hand, and copied down by her from her husband's lips. A marginal note, in another hand, and signed with the name of W. Vavasour, affirmed that such was the truth.

On the morrow Frank was dead; in fact, he died the very night on which the document was signed.

Every word in that paper was a lie, and both Mrs. Tresham and her servant knew it to be a lie. During those sixteen years Mrs. Tresham had constantly received Father Garnet in her house. Nor was the paper in Mrs. Tresham's hand. As both the lady and the scribe confessed later on, it was written by Vavasour himself.

As yet the evidence of guilt which Cecil could produce in court was far too slight to warrant him in arresting the Jesuit chief. A course was taken with the servant Bates, as one less likely to be cunning in his fence. The man, led on from point to point, and hardly seeing the drift of what he said, not only spoke of his confession to Greenway, but of his ride from Norbrook to Coughton, of his scene with Garnet in the hall, and of his night journey to Huddington in company with the gentleman in coloured satin and golden lace. When asked where Greenway could be found, he answered that he thought he was living at Hendlip Hall.

Feeling that the tools of Philip were in his grasp, the Secretary of State proclaimed the three Jesuits, under the style of John Gerard, Henry Garnet, and Oswald Tesmond. The very same day he wrote a curious note to Anne, Lady Markham, of Beskwood Park.

This starless creature had been suffered to reside at Beskwood after her husband's liberation from the Tower, on condition of his going to live abroad. But life was misery to her while Sir Griffin ate the bread of exile, and by force of brooding on her grief, which she attributed, not unfairly, to the Jesuits, she fell into such obliquity of moral view as to think herself justified in doing them every sort of wrong. She had written a note to Cecil, hinting that her place among the Catholics, as one who had suffered in their cause, was such as enabled her to hear and see many things which it behoved the King to learn. Encouraged to speak out, she answered that certain persons then in custody could tell where the missing Jesuits could be found. From Hurleston, then in the Marshalsea, he might hear of Father Gerard; from Digby, then in the Tower, he might hear of Garnet. Cecil, while leading her on by the hope of a pardon for her husband, told her that Gerard, the priest who had sworn the confederates in Butcher Row, was wanted the first and most. To this communication she replied, that while she must be wary in her steps, lest the Catholics should suspect her of playing them false, she was eager to do his bidding and to win his favour. Garnet and Gerard, she could tell him, had been hiding in the house of Mrs. Vaux at Harrowden, and a stricter watch for two days longer would have forced them to come out. Garnet was gone, but Gerard was in the shires; and she offered to inveigle him to Beskwood Park, and then deliver him up a prisoner to the King.

Cecil was free in promises. In letters dated from Whitehall, he told her he was loath to prosecute the Jesuits, but on finding that they had been principals in the plot, he had no choice. Accepting gladly her proposal to ensnare Father Gerard, he sent her down a blank form of warrant, so that her people could arrest him the moment he set foot within her gates.

Lady Markham failed in her treacherous scheme through the zeal of one Rutland Molyneux, a Nottingham squire, who, suspecting her purpose, met Father Gerard on the skirts of Sherwood Forest, and warned him of the peril into which he was about to run. The Father made for Harwich, where he was lucky enough to find a boat.

Greenway came back to London, where, in a new disguise, he hoped to escape pursuit. One day he mixed with a crowd of people in the street who were reading a proclamation for his arrest. One man in the crowd began to eye him sharply; and on his moving off uneasily, this fellow followed him, and seizing him by the arm exclaimed, "You are known; I arrest you in the King's name; you must go with me before the Council at Whitehall." Very quietly saying there was some mistake, the Jesuit offered to go with him; and they walked on together, chatting, until they came to a deserted street, when Greenway sprang upon the fellow, threw him down, and got away. He hid himself for a few days in Essex, and then took boat for Flanders, which he safely reached.

Short shrift was given to the prisoners. Digby, Robert Winter, Grant, and Bates were taken from the Tower and hung near Paul's Cross; while Fawkes, Kay, Rokewood, and Tom Winter were drawn on hurdles, hung, and bowelled in Palace Yard.

The Powder Plot was over; but the Jesuit agents of Spain were still to seek.

* * *

CHAPTER LIV.

SEARCH FOR GARNET.

IF Garnet and Oldcorne had chosen to escape beyond sea, they could easily have found the means. The Council would have been glad to see them go, for the flight of Garnet, as a broken and ruined man, would have been more than evidence of his guilt; it would have been a public confession that his mission from the King of Spain had failed.

Cecil drew a clear distinction between Garnet as a Spanish agent and Garnet as a Catholic priest. In the first of these characters he was an outcast; in the second he was a citizen bound to obey the law. Cecil and Northampton were eager to prove that the old Spanish policy was a failure; and such a proof the Prefect was determined not to give.

Hence, when Greenway, dressed in his satin suit, rode off with Bates from Coughton, Garnet and the ladies kept in their rooms, avoiding strangers, and being served by their faithful people, until the news arrived that Digby was overtaken by the hue and cry near Dudley. Digby, who was weak of tongue, would be forced to speak, and the Prefect felt that Coughton was no longer a place in which he could safely hide. The country was up in arms, and every house suspected of having a Catholic mistress was certain to be searched. Where could he and his females hide until the uproar passed? While he was scheming, Oldcorne arrived from Hendlip Hall with an invitation for himself and train; when he moved, together with Ann Vaux and his servant Little John, to Mrs. Abington's friendly house.

Hendlip Hall, a Tudor house of vast extent, which stood on high ground and swept the country for many miles, had been recently built by Thomas Abington, on plans supplied by Little John, as a hiding-place for priests. Almost every room in the pile had a recess, a passage, a trap-door, and a secret stair. The walls were hollow, the ceilings false. The chimneys had double flues; a passage for the fire, and a second for the priest. One hollow in the wall was covered with most cunning art; a narrow crevice, next to the fireplace, into which a reed was laid from Mrs. Abington's bed-room, so that soup and wine could be passed by her into the recess, without the fact being noticed from any other room. Except the builders and the Jesuits, no one had a key to the whole maze of secrets; but the local gentry were aware that the Hall had been contrived for the concealment of priests; and when the proclamation against the Jesuits came out, Sir Henry Bromley of Holt Castle, an active justice of the peace, was not surprised to receive an order from the Council to search the house. His orders were minute. He was to surround the Hall with his men; to set a guard at every door; to suffer no one to come in, no one to go out, until the priests were found. The servants were to be watched by day and night, to see that they carried no food into strange places. The dining-room was to be carefully examined, and the wainscot pulled down to see if any passage lay beyond. The cellar floors were to be broached. Every room in the house was to be measured, so as to see whether the lower apartments corresponded with the upper in length and breadth. Even the chimney-stacks were to be pierced and probed.

The searchers came upon Mrs. Abington with so much secrecy and suddenness, that the priests and their servants had to run like rats into their holes. Garnet and Oldcorne crept into the crevice near the fireplace, from which the reed for passing soups and wine conducted into Mrs. Abington's room. Chambers and Little John, their servants, hid themselves in a kind of cupboard. No preparation for their stay in these hiding-places had been made. The priests' recess was nearly filled with books and lumber, and the only food which it contained was some pots of marmalade. The servants had no food at all, and their den was stuffed with what Bromley calls "Popish trash."

When the justice showed his warrant from the Council, Mrs. Abington assured him that no one was in hiding at Hendlip. Abington, her husband, was then from home; but, on his coming to the Hall, he confirmed the statement of his wife; adding that he knew nothing of Father Garnet personally, and had not seen Father Gerard for several years. Bromley was surprised; but his orders being strict, he proceeded to search the house, to measure the rooms, and to count the beds. With a list of the family in his hand, he passed through every chamber, noticing which was occupied and which was not. He found more beds in the rooms than guests; and on carefully testing the condition of these beds, he found that some of those which were said to be unused were *warm.*

Mrs. Abington kept her room, in anger at the search being made. Bromley would have had her quit the Hall while his troops were there; but she refused to go, and he dared not turn a lady of her quality—the sister of so great a man as Lord Monteagle—out of doors. He could not guess her reason for so obstinately shutting herself up in a single room—eating there, drinking there, sleeping there—day and night.

But after some days of careful watch had been kept in every room, except the one in which Mrs. Abington lay, a panel in the wainscot opened, and two spectres stepped into the hall. The ghosts were Chambers and Little John, whom Bromley took to be the Jesuit and his man. Mrs. Abington pretended not to know them; but the facts were soon discovered, and the search was then continued for their masters with a warmer hope.

The crevice in which Garnet and Oldcorne lay was low and strait, and being filled with books and furniture, the Fathers could neither stand on their feet nor lie down at length. Their flesh began to swell and their bones to ache; they could hear the searchers tapping at the walls; and from their talk and laughter as they called to each other, they learned that Chambers and Little John were caught. "We were very merry and content within," said Garnet afterwards, when describing the scene to Ann Vaux, "and heard the searchers every day most curious over us, which made me think the place would be found."

But as day after day slid past without result, the magistrate, after setting a watch in every room and corridor, rode home to Holt Castle on his own affairs, for the sake of a little rest; and while he was absent from Hendlip, more precise and positive news of Oldcorne being hid in Mrs. Abington's house was received from Worcester jail.

Humphrey Littleton was being tried for his life in that city, and this poor fellow, whose only crime had been a desire to command a troop of horse against the Dutch, was highly sore against his old confessor. On quitting the gangs at Dunchurch, Humphrey sent a pressing prayer for Oldcorne to join him at once, and tell him what he should now do; but the Jesuit, feeling safe at Hendlip, and hearing that the shires were up in arms, declined to come; on which Humphrey whimpered that his confessor had drawn him into rebellion and then left him to his fate. So long, however, as a chance of life remained to him, he held his tongue; but when the day for hanging him at Worcester had been fixed, he sent his keeper to tell the sheriff and justices, that if his sentence were respited he could render much service to the King. Of course, the respite was given, and a magistrate went to his cell, where he heard from the prisoner's lips that Oldcorne was concealed in a recess at Hendlip; and that one of the servants then in the jail could take a pursuivant to the spot.

Elated by this news, Sir Henry rode back to Hendlip, and, renewing his search, soon found the hollow in the wall. The soldier who slid the panel, seeing two men darkly in the hole, ran back in fear, expecting them to fire. A crowd was soon at the door, to whom Garnet spoke, bidding them be quiet, and saying they would yield themselves in peace. Bromley recognised Garnet from the proclamation. But the Father would not give his name. "You are a learned man?" said Bromley. "Let me be taken before my Lord of Salisbury," answered Garnet; "he will know me." Cecil's cunning courtesies had so far told upon the Prefect, that he thought himself an object of the Secretary's grace.

Abington, arrested with the lie on his lips, was driven, with the four Jesuits whom he had feloniously concealed, to Worcester in Bromley's coach. "I hoped to have lodged you in a citizen's house," said Bromley to the Father; "but I cannot, and you must lie in the jail." Garnet started at the word. "A God's name, I hope you will provide we have not irons, for we are lame already, and shall not be able to ride after it to London." Bromley said he would see to it. He put Garnet into a private room, and left him for a time. On his return, he placed the prisoners in his coach once more, and drove them to Holt Castle, where they remained as guests in his house, well lodged, and sitting at table with Lady Bromley and her people, until Candlemas, to recruit their strength. A banquet was then given, and in the midst of dinner Sir Henry called for wine, and standing up, bareheaded, drank to the King. The Prefect rose to his feet, and pledged the health, as he says, "in a reasonable glass."

Ann Vaux and Mrs. Abington were left at Hendlip Hall.

At length the cavalcade set out from Holt Castle. "I parted from the gentlewomen, who were very kind to me," wrote the Jesuit, "as also all the house." The journey was made by easy stages, and a treacherous kindness met them at every turn. From Bromley Garnet heard that it was by Cecil's express command that he was used so well. He rode the best horse in the company. He travelled at the King's expense. He halted when he pleased, and ate and drank of the best. On the road he met, as it seemed by chance, Dean Abbott and Dean Barlow, two of the court divines. They had a long talk together at an inn, and Garnet was struck by the air of respect which the two Deans put on. Yet these divines were the bitterest enemies of his Order and his Church. When Bromley arrived in London with his charge, he lodged the Prefect in the Gate-house, near Whitehall; Abington in the Fleet; Little John and Chambers in the Tower.

On St. Valentine's Eve, Garnet was marched through a crowd of people to the council chamber of Whitehall, where Cecil and Northampton received him with the treacherous courtesy that had already thrown him off his guard. When he knelt, they bade him stand up. When he began by protesting his innocence of Catesby's plot, "I wish," said Cecil, mildly, "you would not protest so earnestly, since we have certain proof." With smiling courtesy Cecil inquired his opinion about equivocation, about the doctrine of excommunication, and about the Pope's dispensing power. "You see, Mr. Garnet," he insinuated, "we deal not with you in matters of religion, as of your priesthood, or of the real presence." He only asked a question about the oath. Garnet was pleased, as he wrote to Ann Vaux, "to be accounted a traitor without, and not within, the plot." But he was cautious in what he said. To Cecil's question whether it was held by Catholics to be lawful to take up arms against the King, he answered, that no one could rise against his prince unless that prince were excommunicated by the Pope. He thought King James was not excommunicate; and even if he were so, he declared that no one could proceed against him without the Pope's express command. A Catholic could only rise against heretics. Being pressed to say whether the English were not held to be heretics, he answered, "The religion is heretical—of the persons I cannot judge." Cecil put the question, "May the Pope excommunicate our king?" Garnet replied by the evasion, "The Pope is successor to St. Peter, to whom Christ said, *Pasce oves meas*, and so he may excommunicate kings." Cecil urged him to say "Our king;" but he refused to do so, as he alleged, "out of reverence." "Could the Pope release subjects from their obedience?" "There is a canon, *Nos Sanctorum*, wherein is such a rule, which lies beyond my power to abridge." The questioning by Cecil and Northampton lasted two hours, after which Coke attacked him for one hour more. Garnet refused to name his partners in the mission, or even to admit the names by which he was known to his penitents.

Next day, St. Valentine's Day, he was committed to the Tower; to a "horrible dungeon," probably the Keep; but after suffering two bad nights in his miserable den, he was removed, for a reason which he could not guess, into Leslie's old chamber, on the lower tier of the Bloody tower.

"I am allowed every meal," he wrote to Ann Vaux, who had followed him to London, "a good draught of excellent claret wine; and I am liberal with myself and neighbours for good respects, to allow also of my purse some sack; and this is the greatest charge I shall be at."

Contrary to their nature, Coke and Waad, both acting on a hint from court, were civil to the prisoner. Even Popham's awful brow unbent when Garnet came into the Powder Plot Room. During one of his examinations, Garnet said he did not fear to die, for he should die innocently, and death would be welcome. "That were a pity," said Coke, "for you are a man to serve your king and country." One day, when Coke was talking of the time at Hendlip, Garnet said, "If I had a calendar I could tell, for I think it was St. Sebastian's Day." "You have saints for every day?" "We have for the most part," answered Garnet. "Well," quoth Coke, "you shall have no place in the calendar." "I am not worthy of a place in the calendar," said Garnet, "but I hope to have a place in heaven." Waad rallied him about Mrs. Brooksby's child, born at White Webbs; but Popham came to his defence by saying that Brooksby, her husband, lived in the house. Brooksby was bald, and Coke could not resist the opportunity of saying that the baby was seen with a shaven crown.

Once, indeed, Garnet was drawn by these treacherous pleasantries into making what he thought a serious offer to the King. Waad was saying, what he knew to be in Cecil's mind, "The Jesuits' Order shall be dissolved upon this as the Templars' was;" to which the Prefect answered, "Private faults do not prejudice the whole." "The Jesuits shall now all out of England," added Sir William. Garnet then made his offer: "If the King would grant free liberty to other Papists, I will presently send away all Jesuits." Popham started. "That is more than you can do?"

he urged. "I will try," said the Prefect, making to his judge a most dangerous confession of his power over that band of outlaws.

Well lodged, well fed, with plenty of sack and claret, with civil judges and obsequious keepers, Garnet was highly pleased with what was going on. If he could have his "morning delight," he wrote to tell Ann Vaux, he should be happy. What his "morning delight" was, we can only guess; the lady knew, no doubt.

An obliging keeper carried his letter to Ann; and in less than a week after it was sent Ann Vaux was herself a prisoner in the Tower.

CHAPTER LV.

END OF THE ENGLISH JESUITS.

THE whole group of English Jesuits were now in charge of Sir William Waad.

Father Fisher was in the Keep, on the walls of which he inscribed his name. Garnet and Oldcorne, after passing some fifty hours in a dark hole, had been placed in adjoining rooms under Raleigh's lodgings in the Bloody tower. George and Little John were thrown into separate dungeons, dismal and far apart. Abington alone was in the Fleet.

But where was Father Robarts all this while? This Father, the companion of Fawkes in Vinegar House, was taken, as it were, in the fact. His guilt was evident. No jury could have doubted for a moment that he knew of the mine being laid. Near him, in his room, a quantity of Popish books and papers had been seized. These papers were of moment, and in the first hours of their seizure they had been freely used by Coke. Yet from the night of Fawkes' arrest, the Father and his papers disappear from view. Robarts was afterwards seen at large; but what became of him during those five months in which Cecil and Northampton were routing and destroying the Jesuit conspirators, no soul can tell. This sudden disappearance of a man who had come direct from Rome to stand by the side of Fawkes, is one of the darkest mysteries of that mysterious time.

One day, a keeper, of whom Garnet thought he had made a friend by giving him a little sack and a little coin, told the Prefect as a secret that his comrade, Father Oldcorne, lay in the adjoining room. Garnet listened to his words, and then the man, encouraged to go on, pointed to a slide in the wall, and told him that on pushing it back he might converse with his friend. But the thing must be done with care, as keepers might be about who were unfriendly to him, and then the panel would be nailed up. Garnet tried the panel and found his keeper right. Oldcorne was there; and the two Jesuits, after a short prayer in Latin, made confessions to each other; beating their hands the while upon their hearts.

Two spies, named Forsett and Locherson, had been so placed by Waad, that they could hear the two priests; and the main part of their conversation was taken down by these spies. "I had a note from Rokewood," they heard Garnet say (Thomas Rokewood was a brother of Ambrose), "and he telleth me Greenway is gone. . . . I had another from Gerard, that he meaneth to go over to Father Persons. . . . I think Mrs. Ann is in the town; if she be, I have writ a note, that my keeper may repair to her, and convey me anything unto her, who will let us hear from all our friends. I gave him an angel yesterday . . . and he took it very well, with great thanks; and now and then at meals I make very much of him, and give him a cup of sack, and send his wife another, and that he taketh very kindly. . . . You should do well now and then to give him a shilling, and sometimes send his wife somewhat. . . . He did see me write to Mr. Rokewood." The talk was long and curious; for the two Jesuits had not seen each other since they arrived in town. "I must needs confess White Webbs," said Garnet, who had at first denied being there; "but I will answer it thus—that I was there, but knew nothing of the matter." Oldcorne spoke in a lower tone, and the spies could not always catch his words. "Mr. Attorney," Garnet went on to say, 'told me very friendly, that he would make the best construction of my examination to the King, and do me good. If I can satisfy the King, it will be well; but I think it not convenient to deny that we were at White Webbs. . . . They pressed me to be there in October last, which I will by no means confess; but I will tell them I was not there since Bartholomew's tide; neither will I tell them of my knowledge of any of the servants there, for they may examine and perhaps torture some of them, and make them yield to some confession. . . . I am persuaded I shall wind myself out of this matter." Poor fellow! A noise was now heard in the passage, for the spies had learnt enough for the day; and Garnet was heard to say in a whisper to Oldcorne, "Hark you—hark you—Mr. Lieutenant! Make a hawking and spitting while I shut the door."

Two days later, the keeper to whom Garnet had given his money and his wine, made a motion that the coast was clear; on which Garnet slid back the panel, and held a second confidential chat with Oldcorne. "They charge me," said Garnet, "with some advice in the Queen's time for blowing up the Parliament House with powder. . . . I told them at that time it was lawful, but wished them to save as many as they could that were innocent." Here was the evidence that Cecil and Northampton needed for his condemnation. "They pressed me," Garnet added, "what noblemen I knew that have written any letters to Rome. . . . . Well, I see they will justify my Lord Monteagle of all this matter." What he said next was doubtful; for a cock in the Lieutenant's garden under his window gave a lusty crow. The spies reported that he mentioned the names of Lord Northumberland, Lord Rutland, and one other, though in what connection he referred to these noblemen they could not tell.

The two Jesuits held a long debate as to how they should shape their confessions, not to differ in the main. Garnet complained that Oldcorne was rather lax, not standing to the bargain they had made while hiding at Hendlip. "They went away last time unsatisfied," said Garnet, speaking of Northampton and the other commissioners, "and therefore we may expect the rack. . . . Mr. Attorney was about to write, but when he had written these lines he gave it over, and seemed to be angry, saying, 'I had lost my credit, for *he* had undertaken for me to the King.'" The spies reported that Garnet spoke much of a gentlewoman, and said that if he were charged with her, he would excuse her coming with him; but how he was to do it, they could not plainly hear him say. They made a noise, as if some one were coming, on which Garnet asked Oldcorne to take a shovel and rattle the coals while he closed the dividing door.

These secret conferences, overheard by spies, continued for a week. In one of his brief confessions to his fellow-priest, Garnet admitted having drunk so much that he had twice been obliged to be put to bed. Oldcorne mentioned that he had heard from some one that their servants were being questioned; when Garnet replied that his own man, Little John, would never confess to anything against him. While he was using these words, this faithful servant, broken by his fear of the rack, was dying in another cell.

Up to the previous day Little John's strength had not been tried. Being asked in the ordinary way how he came to Hendlip, he refused to say; he knew neither Garnet nor Oldcorne; and though he had known Chambers for some years, he could not tell them whether he was Oldcorne's man or not. But on his thumbs being tied together, and his body being raised by a beam, he instantly gave up his master's name. This clever architect could not bear the torture, and while his limbs were stretched he answered every question they chose to put. He had served Father Garnet from the date of the Essex rising. He had been with him often at White Webbs. He went with him down to Coughton, where he heard him say mass before the insurrection broke out; and afterwards to Hendlip Hall, where Garnet and Oldcorne dined and supped with Mr. and Mrs. Abington every day until the search began. These were the confessions of which Oldcorne had heard some hints; but Waad, who thought he could tell much more, told the lay Jesuit that his next examination should be taken on the rack.

The threat sufficed. Next day Little John complained of sickness, when his keeper lent him a chair to sit on and a knife to cut his meat. The broth for his dinner, he said, was cold; and feeling very faint, he begged the keeper to put it for a moment on the fire in an adjacent room. So soon as the man was gone he ripped himself open with his knife, and, gathering up the straw about his knees, sat still and bled until the keeper came. Seeing his prisoner covered with straw and dabbled with blood, the man ran off to the Lieutenant, whom he found at table with his guests, and gave the alarm; on which Waad and the gentlemen who were dining with him rushed to the suicide's cell. The Jesuit was gone past hope, and the only speech they could draw from him was that he had killed himself in fear of the rack, lest in his weakness and his agony he might be tempted to betray the lives of men who had always been his friends.

A brave man, worthy of a nobler fate!

Ann Vaux was no less brave. In following Garnet to London and taking lodgings near the Tower, she knew the dangers into which she ran. About the time of her arrival, her house at White Webbs was searched, and her servant, James, was seized. Tied on the rack, this servant told the story of her life in Enfield Chase—her false names—her priestly guests—her dangerous visitors; yet for two or three weeks the Council allowed her to remain at large, and to correspond with her confessor in the Bloody tower. She sent in parcels of linen and boxes of marmalade. Garnet asked her for money to pay his fees, and he told her she must come to his keeper's mother for instructions how to act. If she came to the Lieutenant's garden, near his window, she could see him, though she must not try to speak. He told her to get some of the Society's money if she could, as he wanted to buy beds "for James, John, and Harry, who have been tortured." This note —and much that followed it—was sent by a private hand; but the Lieutenant seems to have seen it before it passed the gate.

Ann Vaux, arrested and committed to the Tower, was sharply questioned as to her residence at White Webbs, and the gathering of conspirators beneath her roof. She answered boldly; confessing that Catesby, Winter, and Tresham had been her guests, and frequently at her table; that she had gone with Lady Digby to St. Winifred's Well; that she was at Coughton on the first of November last. But not one word could be drawn from her against the Jesuits. She would not say what priests were at the Well. She had heard no prayer, no mass, at Coughton. Told that Garnet had confessed the plot, she expressed her sorrow and surprise; as he had made to her many protests to the contrary. When they found her useless as a witness, they remembered her noble birth and set her free.

Nine days later Ann sent to the Tower a pair of spectacles, wrapped in a bit of paper, on which were written, in plain black ink, these harmless words, "I pray you prove whether these spectacles do fit your sight;" but when this piece of paper was held before a fire, the text of a letter, written in orange-juice, came out. She told the prisoner that Coke, at supper-time on Saturday night, had spoken of him. He had said that Garnet, feigning to be sick, had gone to his chamber, where his keeper saw him take a letter from a box of marmalade, just then come in, and burn it. He had also said that Garnet had confessed to his knowledge of the powder, though he still denied any practice in it. She told him that the box and paper were from her hands. She was glad they reached him. The spectacles and scrap were from her; and if they came to him safely, then other of his friends would write, and steps could be taken to supply his room. She added, "For myself, I am forced to seek new friends, my old are wearied of me. I beseech you, for God's sake, advise me what course to take. My hope is, you will continue your care of me, and commit me to some that will for your sake help me. To live without you is not life, but death. Now I see my loss, I am and ever will be yours; and so I humbly beseech you to account me. Oh that I might see you!"

On this letter being read by Coke, the writer was again arrested, and her house examined, when a heap of relics, altar stuff, and priestly trappings, were discovered. She said they belonged to her sister and herself. She confessed that Father Garnet had lived with her at White Webbs; that her cousin, Frank Tresham, had often come to see them; but she declared that the Jesuit had always counselled him to be patient in his griefs. The notes of this second examination were sent by Coke to Cecil.

As nothing could be learned from Ann Vaux, the Government were forced to make use of the conversations which had been overheard by their spies in the Bloody tower.

Oldcorne was carried into the Powder Plot Room, and charged by the Commissioners with having held a clandestine conversation with Garnet in the Bloody tower. Startled by the announcement, Oldcorne confessed that he had spoken with his friend through the door; and, being pressed by Coke, admitted details which were fatal to his comrade and himself. He was often at White Webbs, where he had met with Garnet, Gerard, and many more; but Garnet had told him in the Tower that he would never confess to being at White Webbs. Garnet had also told him, in the Tower, that he had taken the lead in those prayers at Coughton which in public he had strenuously denied.

Garnet was now brought in and questioned. Secret conference with Oldcorne! Never. He had not seen his fellow-prisoner; had never exchanged a word with him. When shown the paper signed by Oldcorne, he said it was all a lie; that Oldcorne might accuse him, but he would never accuse himself. On being threatened with the rack, however, he confessed to the main facts; and then he was sent to trial under a special commission, consisting of Sir Leonard Halliday, Lord Mayor, the four Catholic Earls to whom Cecil had read Monteagle's letter (Nottingham, Northampton, Suffolk, and Worcester), Sir John Popham, and some others. The trial took place in Westminster Hall; the King was present behind a curtain, and the Lady Arabella looked on the scene from a private box.

Oldcorne had been already tried, condemned, and executed.

Garnet's trial (March, 1606) was a form only, for he had been already tried in secret and condemned to die. The trial lasted some hours; Garnet defended himself with subtilty and spirit; and Northampton made a long and scurrilous attack on the Jesuits, in a speech which he afterwards printed in London and explained away in Rome.

From the Tower gates, the Jesuit was carried to Ludgate Hill, in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, where a gallows had been built for him. A multitude of people came to see him suffer, and, like many a worse man than himself, he made a devout end. The injury which he had done to Ann Vaux was on his mind to the last, and he spoke some words on the scaffold to clear her fame. "There is an honourable gentlewoman," he said, not aloud to the people, but in a low, sad voice, to those about him, "who hath been much wronged by report, for it is suspected and said, that I should be married to her, *or worse.* I protest the contrary. She is a virtuous gentlewoman; and for me a perfect virgin." He prayed for the King and Queen. He said he had held out in denial, because he thought the Council had no proof against him. He now confessed his fault; and hoped that the Catholics would fare no worse for his sake. As he was saying his prayer, "Maria Mater gratiæ, Maria Mater misericordiæ," the cart was drawn from beneath his feet.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE CATHOLIC LORDS.

WHILE Cecil and Northampton were employed in driving and seizing the priestly members of the Plot, they were not unmindful of those Catholic peers who, from their name and faith, could not help being the most acceptable of Englishmen in the court of Spain. Such peers as Montagu, Mordaunt, Stourton, and Northumberland, were counted in their several ways, by foreign princes, most of all by Philip the Third, as the living force of the Catholic cause; the men by whom the country would be drawn at some future time into what they called the ancient family union of the Church. These peers might be out of favour; but men who had half the population of England at their back could never be out of power.

Cecil and Northampton had to show the Duke de Lerma that a foreign minister who counted on these Catholic lords was counting on a bundle of broken reeds.

The facts which came out in the earliest questioning of Fawkes and Winter in the Tower, enabled them to take defensive measures against these lords without appearing to go beyond the stern necessities of the case. Fawkes had lived in the household of Lord Montagu, Kay in that of Lord Mordaunt. Stourton, who lived in Clerkenwell, was married to Frances

Tresham, a sister of "Cousin Frank." Catesby was known to have warned Stourton and Mordaunt against coming to the House of Lords. Percy was not only a kinsman and servant of Northumberland, but was known to have supped with him at Sion on Monday night. Such facts, as they came out one by one, excited the public mind; but Cecil, in giving orders to restrain the four great Catholic peers, took every opportunity of hinting that he meant them well. At first, they were confined to their several houses; then, some of them were removed to the houses of aldermen and justices of the peace; but in less than eight weeks after the arrest of Guy Fawkes they were all committed to the Tower.

Anthony Maria Browne, second Viscount Montagu, of Cowdray in Sussex, was a youth of thirty-three, a master of many manors, colleges, and farms, and the husband of Lady Jane, a daughter of Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the eminent poet and Lord High Treasurer of England. He lived in Montagu Close, the great Priory of St. Mary Overies, near London Bridge, a pile which had been given by Henry the Eighth to his grandsire, the first Lord Montagu of his line. The Priory was Church property, and when the Brownes became Catholic under Mary, it was hoped they would cease to hold an estate which belonged to God. In fact, the old Viscount had become strict in his principles; he had married Maud Dacre; he had called his grandson and heir "Maria;" but he stuck to Montagu Close as firmly as though he had been the laxest heretic in the realm.

The case against Anthony Maria, Viscount Montagu, was ugly enough under any explanation, and he had the misfortune to give more than one explanation of the leading facts. The points which told most against him were:—that Guy Fawkes had been one of the servants near his person; that Catesby had given him some hint of what would occur when the King was seated on his throne; and that he had proposed to be absent from his place in Parliament on the opening day.

To the first point he answered, that Fawkes was placed by his grandfather in his household when he married; that he was then a boy under nineteen; and that Fawkes was in his service only about four months. But he could not say that he had never seen him since that time. On pressure, he confessed that Fawkes, after the first Viscount's death, had slept in his house and served at his table. The explanation was, that his steward, one Spencer, a kinsman of "the miserable fellow," had given him a few days' lodging in Montagu Close, and while he was staying there, had turned his service to account. All this took place twelve years ago, and since that time he had scarcely ever seen or thought of him.

To the second point he answered, that he met with Catesby in the Strand by accident on the Tuesday before All Saints' Day, as he was going to the Savoy to dine; that the conspirators gave him no warning to absent himself from Parliament; that their speech was only general, as to the cause of his being absent in the country. But the very next day, he corrected the date on which these dangerous speeches had been held in the Strand into the Tuesday fortnight before All Saints' Day; a date which he could fix, he said, from the fact that he was dining in the Savoy with his aunt, Lady Southampton.

To the third point he answered, that he proposed to be absent from London on the opening day by the King's good leave, and not otherwise; a leave which he hoped to procure through the Earl of Dorset, his father-in-law. If this leave could not be obtained for him, he meant to be in his place. The old Viscountess Montagu (poor Maud Dacre) knew about it; for on telling her of his plan for going down into the country, she had begged him not to go, unless he could first get leave of absence from Parliament, as the hard riding would be too much for his health.

From Sir Thomas Bennet's house he was carried to the Tower; but for the sake of Lady Jane, if not for his own, the Council dealt with his inconsistencies in a tender spirit. Brought before the Star Chamber, he was condemned to a fine of four thousand pounds and imprisonment during his Majesty's pleasure. In the end he compounded for his fine, and lay in the Tower about forty weeks.

Henry Mordaunt, fourth Baron Mordaunt of Drayton Manor in county Northants, and of Turvey in county Beds, was descended on his mother's side from the old Catholic family of Darcy, one of whose members had forfeited his honours by the Pilgrimage of Grace. Mordaunt was a close friend of Catesby, but being a Catholic of the old English school, he could not be entrusted with the secrets of his plot. He was a weak and pliant creature, whom the haughty Catesby had to manage and despise. Some one had proposed to swear him. "Not for a church full of diamonds!" cried the man who knew him best. If Mordaunt were told the secret, even on the Primer, Catesby was of opinion that he could not keep it. Easy and yielding, he was used, like the two Littletons, by that mastering spirit, who induced him to permit his servants to be employed in raising men, under cover of a design to fight in the Archduke's cause. Two Irish fellows, named O'Ferrall, who had been tempted to enlist, gave evidence against Mordaunt's man. More than one of the prisoners confessed that Catesby had given some hints to his friend; and Mordaunt had made excuses for not being present with his peers, on the ground that his conscience would not allow him to attend the King at church.

Turvey, his ancient seat in Beds, was a notorious nest of Jesuits. Kay had lived in his house, and Kay's wife was the teacher of his children. All these things were against him. Brought before the Star Chamber, Mordaunt was sentenced to a heavy fine, with imprisonment during the King's pleasure; and after six months of rather sharp privation in the Tower, he was liberated on conditions which left him a broken man. In succeeding reigns the Mordaunts rose again; chiefly in the person of Henry's grandson, the meteoric Earl of Peterborough; but for twenty years to come his utmost care was needed to preserve in his family that lordship of Turvey which had been their own since the reign of Henry the First.

Edward Stourton, ninth Baron Stourton of Stourton, in county Wilts, was the second son of that wretched Charles, Lord Stourton, who had been hung, in a silken cord, on account of his quality, for the murder of his neighbours, the two Hargils, father and son. Edward, then a boy, was said, like his elder brother John, to have been privy to the crime; but the lads were spared on account of their youth; and after eighteen years had passed over the public memory, the two brothers were restored in blood, in order that John might sit, as one of the old Catholic peers, on the bench which was to condemn Mary, Queen of Scots, to death. This John, eighth Lord Mordaunt, died without issue; and Edward, his partner in suspicion, came into the honours of his race.

A dark and gloomy fanatic, with hands not free from blood, and weighted with the curse of his father's shame, this Edward, ninth Lord Stourton, had lived a lonely life, the companion and the victim of monks and priests. Lady Stourton was Frances, a daughter of Sir Thomas Tresham, and therefore a sister of "Cousin Frank." Their London house was in Clerkenwell; a part of the famous priory of that place; for the Stourtons, like the Brownes, had no objection to receive church lands.

Brought before the Star Chamber, Stourton, who could neither deny his intimacy with Catesby and

"Cousin Frank," nor explain to the court his reason for absenting himself on the opening day, was sentenced to a thousand pounds fine and imprisonment during pleasure in the Tower. This fine was compounded, and the prisoner released; compounded, not paid; for two years after his release from the Tower, the fine was returned in a draft of outstanding public debts. What was due to private persons had been paid to the uttermost coin.

Compounding for fines was a curious and immoral traffic, and being conducted with the utmost secrecy was understood by few. Lord Stourton happened to be one of those few; his wife being a Tresham, and one of a family which had been driven by their misfortunes into studying the mysteries of this immoral trade.

When Cousin Frank went out with Essex into the Strand, he fell into so much danger that every one expected him to share the fate of Cuffe and Lea. But the Treshams were rich, and some great ladies in the court were poor. A communication was made to Sir Thomas, in a roundabout way, on behalf of a young lady who might be able to help his son. This young lady, the daughter of no less a person than Lord Howard of Walden, Constable of the Tower (afterwards Earl of Suffolk; the same who went into the vault and jested about the coal and wood), was represented as being willing to plead for Frank, on certain trusts being executed in her favour by the master of Rushton Hall. Catharine Howard was then a child, too young to speak with her Majesty on any subject more serious than a toy; but her mother, Lady Howard, the sharpest intriguer living, had arranged with her lover, Sir Robert Cecil, that this girl should some day be the wife of his eldest son; and therefore it seemed right in the Secretary's eyes that Catharine should be provided with a dowry out of traitors' lands. Sir Thomas, knowing that the life of his son was in their power, consented to lodge with a third party, not to be named in the writings, certain bonds of large amount, on the understanding that these bonds were to be handed over to certain "honourable persons," when a "matter" not set forth in words was performed, and to be returned to Sir Thomas in case that "matter" was not performed. How much money was paid to the young lady by Sir Thomas remains a secret; one of the bonds was drawn for twenty-one hundred pounds, and several were for a thousand pounds a-piece. The bribe was so large, that Sir Thomas always said the payment crippled him for life.

Through some such channel as Lady Suffolk's daughter, Stourton compounded for his fine.

But the ruin of these three barons was of less importance to Cecil and Northampton than that of the great northern Earl, the friend of Raleigh, the mainspring of the war party, the future hope of the Catholics, and the most powerful personage living beyond the Trent.

CHAPTER LVII

HARRY PERCY.

HARRY PERCY, ninth earl and twenty-first baron of his line, had won his spurs of knighthood in the Low-Country war and in the Armada fight; in which, though a good Catholic, he had fought with heroic fire against the King of Spain. But his hope of achieving a great career in arms had been quenched by the many and unseemly quarrels into which his violence of temper led him.

Even when the flush of youth was gone, he had little control over his tongue and pen, and at thirty he behaved like an overgrown schoolboy. For two years he had fought in the lines of Ostend with credit, when his mutinous passions entrapped him into an indecent broil with his commander, the illustrious Vere, whom he wished to call out and fight. He quarrelled with his comrades, and separated from his Countess. This lady, a sister of Lord Essex and of Lady Rich, was of a temper heated and unruly like his own; and when they bickered in their golden halls, Northumberland rode away from her, engaged a mistress to live with him, in open shame, and hired a lodging for her near the court in order to provoke his wife.

Apart from an infirmity which he shared with his ancestor and namesake, Harry Hotspur, Percy was a gallant soldier and a princely friend. Raleigh respected him as a companion in arms. Neither Pembroke nor Southampton rivalled him in his sympathy for science and the liberal arts. Peele and Heriot were his constant companions. Spenser sent him a sonnet, and a copy of the Faery Queen. Peele composed for him his poem called "The Honour of the Garter;" and Heriot owed to his bounty that leisure for investigation which led to his discoveries in solar and stellar science. It was said in Percy's praise, that no scholar ever turned disheartened from his door. Himself a student of art and nature, he toyed with every subject in its turn; with numbers, with music, with the starry heavens, with alchemy, with the elixir of life. Bacon looked to him as a patron of the new learning: "Your great capacity and love towards studies and contemplations of a higher and nobler nature than popular (a nature rare in this world, and in a person of your lordship's quality almost singular), is to me," wrote Bacon, "a great and chief motive to draw my affection and admiration towards you." In person, he was the soul of honour; and if he could only have curbed his petulant tongue, he would have been one of the most perfect paladins in the English court.

The name, the valour, and the possessions of Percy, had pointed him out as Lord Protector, in case the kingdom should require such an officer on the Queen's demise. The whole north country would have rallied to his flag; and the known wishes of the great Earl, as to the coming in of James, had done more to make his entry pleasant than those of any other man.

The King, too well aware of his service, had hardly crossed the border before he called him to his Council by a special act. Yet the lines were drawn between Cecil and Percy from the opening day of the new reign; and every slight that could be made to gall and wound a spirit only too quick to see offence was put on Percy by his smiling and respectful adversary. Percy, who had thought of finding great employments under James, was sore at heart; and being sore at heart, was certain to be loud of tongue. He talked to Bethune. He inspired Watson with hope. Even if he had been careful of his words, he could not have failed to be the subject of conversation in taverns like the Hart's Horn, in slums like Butcher Row; and he was far from careful of his words. The circle at White Webbs made many inquiries about him. Once, indeed, they thought of making him their General, in place of Stanley; but his fanatical kinsman, who had come to think of godliness as a thing of fasting, whip-cord, and a horse-hair shirt, reported that the Earl had given up religion for science and the worldly arts. When Raleigh was arrested, Percy went down to Windsor Castle to defend his chief; and, but for Cecil's fear of trying too much at once, he would have been wrecked in the Arabella Plot instead of in the Powder Plot.

So great a man could not be readily set aside, and Percy was associated with the court in many offices of grace. He was made Captain of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners; he was chosen as witness when Prince Charles was created Duke of York; he bore the basin when Princess Mary was christened. The Countess of Northumberland was one of Mary's godmothers; the King's cousin, Lady Arabella, being the other. Sion House, which Percy had previously rented from the crown, was now settled on him by grant.

Still, he had little actual power; and after Raleigh's trial and reprieve at Winchester, he retired in weariness of spirit from a world in which he could find no peace, and tried to console himself with the intellectual delights of study, building, gardening, and the like. The Lord of Wressil in Yorkshire, of Petworth in Sussex, of Alnwick in Northumberland, of thirty other manors, parks, and castles, he had scope enough for the indulgence of princely tastes. The Earl spent much of his time at Sion, where he transformed the dull monastic garden into a laughing lea of flowers; among which he played with his four little ones—Algernon and Henry, Dorothy and Lucy; boys and girls who were, each and all to live remarkable lives: Algernon as tenth Earl of Northumberland, one of the heroes of the Civil War; Henry as Lord Percy of Alnwick, the favourite cavalier of Queen Henrietta Maria; Dorothy as Countess of Leicester, and mother of Algernon Sydney; Lucy as Countess of Carlisle, the friend of Strafford and of Pym, and the subject of a thousand rapturous songs.

Northumberland was clever, popular, and rich. Some envied his reputation; many coveted his lands. Even while he was training his plants and sporting with his children on the lawns at Sion, his fate was drawing him towards that dungeon which had been the dwelling of so many of his race.

Most of the old fighting Percies had been prisoners in the Tower. More than one had been murdered in its chambers; and many of them had passed through the Bye-ward gate to the block on Tower Hill. The Beauchamp tower and the Bloody tower were dark with the traditions of his house; and now another tower on the Ballium wall was waiting to receive her guest, and grow into sudden fame as the prison of Percy the Wizard Earl.

Incapable of prudence, Northumberland had been more than usually imprudent in his dealings with his kinsman, Thomas Percy, the conspirator; for he had not only given him a place in the band of Gentlemen Pensioners, but had suffered him to enter on his duties without taking the customary oaths. There he was wrong, and wrong beyond excuse. Percy knew that his kinsman disliked the King; he ought to have known that he was a convert and a tool of the Jesuits. Such a man was unfit for a post so near the King, and, even if he had been fit for such a post, he ought never to have been admitted without the usual forms. The great sum of money which Thomas Percy had brought to London was the Earl's property, and Northumberland seems to have been careless in exacting from him his vouchers and returns of rent. But the circumstance of darkest note was that supper on Monday night, when Fawkes rode down to report the official searching of the vault. Fawkes had no sooner confessed to having found his master at Sion, than the Earl was commanded by the Council to keep his house. In vain he pleaded in defence his secluded ways, his absence from court, his devotion to his books, his plants, his children, and the innocent pleasures of a country life. Taken from Sion, he was given in custody to Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, and remained at Lambeth Palace for twenty days, when he was carried down to the Tower, in which he lay five months without being either accused or heard.

At the end of June (1606) he was brought before the Star Chamber, and accused (1) of wishing to put himself at the head of the Papists, and to procure their toleration: (2) of admitting Thomas Percy to be a Gentleman Pensioner without taking the oaths. Four additional articles were drawn, but they were only variations of these two. The sentence was, that the Earl of Northumberland should be fined in thirty thousand pounds; that he should be deposed from the Council, and removed from his Captaincy of the Pensioners; that he should cease to be Lord-Lieutenant of any shire; that he should be kept a prisoner in the Tower for life. He raised a passionate cry against the justice of such a sentence; but the lords were deaf to his wrongs, and Sir William Waad conducted him once again to that gloomy fortress in which his father had been shot to death.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE WIZARD EARL.

A SPACIOUS and secluded house was found for Percy in the Martin tower, on the north-east angle of the Ballium wall; a house which had been occupied before his time by Lord Rochfort and other gentlemen connected with Anne Boleyn; which was occupied after his time by Archbishop Sancroft and his fellow-sufferers in the church. The vaults of this mural tower, which are exceedingly strong, were used during many reigns as the royal jewel-house; and here occurred the desperate attempt of Colonel Blood to steal the crown. Here also occurred the comicalities of the Tower ghost. But the ghost which haunts the stairs and terraces around the Martin tower is that of Harry Percy, who lay in it for sixteen years, and whose quaint garb, unusual studies, and strange companionship, caused him to be known as "The Wizard Earl."

The terrace on the wall connecting his lodging with the Brick tower and the Constable's tower is called the Earl of Northumberland's Walk. Heriot's sun-dial, fixed by that famous astronomer, is still to be seen on the southern face of the Martin tower.

Percy's wild youth continued into his middle age, and his character was a puzzle to the wisest men. Nobody could dispute his courage, his attainments, his munificence; though every one could see that his temper was bad, his learning fantastic, his conduct suspicious. He was a student, a swordsman, a sorcerer; a man given equally to cards, to science, and to pleasure; as prompt with his blade as he was saucy with his tongue. But the scornful habit, which had wrought him so much evil in his younger time, soon softened when he came to reside in the Martin tower. Injustice acted on his mind in an unusual way; for he who could hardly bear a prosperous fortune like a man of sense, bore the miseries of a harsh and undeserved imprisonment with noble pride. The wife who could not live under his roof at Sion and Petworth, came to share his cell in the Martin tower; where her pretty children became the spoiled darlings, not of their father only, but of every person in the Tower.

The Countess was but too familiar with her new and dismal home—the Tower. Stout Sir John Perrot, the father of her first husband, died in one of its vaults. The dust of her brother Robert, Earl of Essex, lay in the dark little church under Develin tower. Many of her brother's old friends and rivals—Raleigh, Cobham, Grey—were daily seen in the garden and on the wall. Her second husband was now a prisoner; not to come forth, though happily she could not know so much, until long after she had worn out her life with care and watching.

No man then lying in the Tower was kept a prisoner on more flimsy pretexts than the Earl. His real offence was being too great; his pretended crime was being a kinsman of Thomas Percy. He had no more to do with the Gunpowder Plot than with the Arabella Plot; but having a hot temper and a vast estate, his fellows of the Council-board were anxious to stop his tongue and to get his land. Such a fine as thirty thousand pounds, he said, was never laid before on any subject in any realm. It was a king's ransom; equal to £150,000 in our present coin.

When Percy urged that such a sum could not be wrung from a private estate, the King was advised to take his affairs in hand and try his skill in collecting rents. It was bad advice; bad in law, and bad in business; for the Star-chamber sentence had left the Earl's property intact; and the crown had no legal right to levy the fine by seizure and distress. But what was law to men like Cecil, Suffolk, and Northampton, the three great peers who now ruled the King? The manors were seized, the farms were let on lease, and the rents were collected by agents for the crown. In vain the Earl protested. "This method is not used," he wrote; "my lands are spoiled, my houses ruinated, my suits in law prejudiced, my officers imprisoned, my debts unsatisfied." All this was true. The king's receivers grew fat; but the King himself got little of the spoil. These receivers were allowed two shillings in every pound of rent, and as they paid their receipts into the county courts only once a-year, they had the use of his money for many months. To get the place of a receiver of Northumberland's rents was to get a good thing. "In all this provision for them," cried the Earl, "I find not a thought of one penny for either wife, child, or myself. There wants nothing but strewing the land with salt."

The Countess came to court, and threw herself at James's feet, as Lady Raleigh was then doing daily, though with gentler passion and livelier hope; praying that his Majesty would not suffer the bread to be taken from her children's mouths. James told her, with far more kindness than his wont, that he would never hurt her and her children. She was his old friend's sister, dear to his heart for that old friend's sake. She must rely upon him. Lady Northumberland flew to the Martin tower with these gracious words; and Percy, who thought his time had come, drew up a statement and petition to the King; in which he asked no more than leave to go home to his house in Petworth. "Hum," said James, in answer; "I must take my own time."

While waiting on the King's leisure, which was long in coming, Percy made the best of his crowded rooms. He hired from Lord Carew, Master of the Ordnance, the adjoining house—the Brick tower—as an occasional residence for his son Algernon, in whose young face he loved to recall the heroes of his line. Lady Dorothy was often with him. Lady Lucy came and went, like a summer bird, bringing gleams of light from the outer world into his cell. In that cell he made a collection of books, globes, astrolabes; and drew to himself a society of learned and ingenious men. Thomas Heriot came to live with him in the Martin tower, and in the midst of his many embarrassments Percy never allowed the poor student's pension to go unpaid. Walter Warner and Robert Hues were also his constant visitors; and these three men of science were known in the Tower wards as the Earl of Northumberland's Magi. John Dee, the astrologer, came also to the Martin tower; where he met with a host of scholars, such as Thomas Allen, Nathaniel Torperley, and Nicholas Hill. To all these servants of science the Wizard Earl was a bountiful patron and enduring friend.

One comfort in a confinement which was long without being always strict, lay in the occasional freedom of his intercourse with Raleigh, in whose experiments of the still-house he felt a warm and mystical interest; hoping that the phials which held the Great Cordial would one day hold the Elixir of Life.

All his wife's appeals to James were fruitless. Solomon told the Countess he should like her husband to prove that Thomas Percy had *not* given him notice of the plot. "Your Majesty, that is so great a scholar," answered Northumberland, with biting sarcasm, "cannot but know how impossible it is to prove a negative."

At length, some change came over his affairs at court, in a way which he had neither expected nor desired. As his children grew up, they fell into love with other young people of their age and rank. Of course, they fell into love with persons whom their father scorned as unworthy of alliance with the Percy blood. Algernon was kneeling at the feet of Lady Anne Cecil, grandchild of Lady Suffolk; but on a match between the youth and maid being proposed to the recluse in the Martin tower, the Earl proudly exclaimed against it, crying, "The blood of Percy would not mix with the blood of Cecil, if you poured them into a dish." In time, though not with Percy's consent and blessing, that match of Algernon with Lady Anne took place.

The love-affairs of his daughter Lucy crossed him even more than those of his son. This girl, whose incomparable beauty as a woman was the theme of a dozen poets, from Waller to Carew, and the snare of eminent men from Strafford to Pym, was fluttering into a first young love with the favourite, James Hay, afterwards Earl of Carlisle. The Wizard raved and stormed at her folly. What could a Percy have to do with upstart curs like Hay? Believing in his heart that Hay was following Lady Lucy for her money—as he heard, right truly, that Lady Suffolk was courting Algernon for his money—he sent the Scotch favourite word, that if she married any man without his leave she should never get a penny from his purse. But Hay, in love with a pair of bright eyes, and never troubling himself to count the cost of his love, ran off with his message to the girl, caught her up in his arms, obtained her consent, and married her in a trice. The King, who was present at their nuptials, which took place at court, with a thousand gaieties and fooleries—eating the wine posset, throwing the left shoe, and running at the ring—made a bridal present to Lady Lucy Hay of a promise for her father's enlargement from the Tower.

But Lady Lucy found it an easier task to get a pardon from the King than to induce her father to accept it. Percy would not owe his liberty to Hay; and when the order for his release was read to him, the venerable Wizard, swearing he would not owe thanks to Hay, went back to his books, his globes, and his magi in the Martin tower. That tower had come to be his home. Lady Northumberland was dead; his son was married; his health was failing; and he cared no longer for the glory and greatness of the world. His comrade Heriot was in correspondence with Kepler, on things of higher moment than the intrigues of a court; on the laws of vision; on the cause of rainbows; on the sun-spots, which he noticed before they had been seen by Galileo; on the satellites of Jupiter, which he was the first in England, perhaps in Europe, to observe. He was busy with the theory of numbers, to which Percy had given a good deal of his time. In the face of such studies, what to the Wizard Earl were the rivalries of Buckingham and Hay?

The doors were open; but he would not go. The Lieutenant informed him that he had orders to use him with honour, and to announce his departure with saluting guns. Lord Percy and Lady Lucy, whom he received in sorrow, as children who had lowered his family pride, persuaded him that he ought to go down to Bath for the benefit of his health. But he was long in making up his mind to go. At length he allowed himself to be put into a coach, and carried away from his nightly lodging and his daily walk, under a joyous salute of guns. But the old Adam was not dead in his veins. On reaching his house, he heard that the new Duke of Buckingham was driving about town in a coach with six horses. Six horses! Who was this Villiers, that he should outbrave a Percy in magnificence? With a cry of contempt, the Earl commanded his servants never to drive him through London with less than eight horses to his coach.

On his return from Bath, he lived mainly at Petworth, with Heriot constantly at his side; laying up in the library of that baronial seat the letters and papers which in a new generation added so much to the glory of English science.

CHAPTER LIX.

A REAL ARABELLA PLOT.

AT length the young lady, in whose name so many gallant men had been accused of treason and committed to the Tower, was herself an offender against the King, and a prisoner in the dungeon of her race.

For Lady Arabella Stuart had the presumption to fall in love and marry her lover, without the King's consent; an act of disobedience in one so near the throne to bring her within the penalties of that law which had been passed to punish her starless grandmother, Margaret Douglas, the sister of James the Fourth.

No passage in the story of our royal house has a more pathetic comedy than the tale of Arabella Stuart's love for her young and graceless kinsman, William Seymour; of her secret marriage to that cold and calculating paladin; of her sudden arrest and long imprisonment; of her romantic efforts to escape from London; of her final separation from her lord; and the train of evils which that escape and separation brought upon the adoring wife.

This pair of lovers were descended from Henry the Seventh, and had the turbulent Tudor blood careering in their veins. Seymour was a grandson of Catharine Grey, whose grandmother was Mary Tudor, Queen of France; Arabella was a granddaughter of Margaret

Douglas, whose mother, Margaret Tudor, was the Queen of Scots. Each of these personages stood too near the throne for safety; and many of the keenest critics of the Court imagined that the young lady would be one day Queen. "Some time," Elizabeth had been heard to say, when speaking with the French ambassador's wife, "this child will be lady-mistress here, even as I am."

When James the First came in, his cousin, a fair young woman of twenty-eight summers, with round blue eyes, soft oval face, arched brows, and ripples of curling hair, was the Rosalind of a dull court; tender in spirit, young in wit, lightsome in manner, full of prank and jest. Without being much of a beauty, she had not the less been thought, in her younger time, a most engaging and attractive girl. A good talker, a fine musician, she was the delight of every house in which she lived. As a princess of the royal blood, she had been pursued by adorers. Princes had sought her from north and south; the King of Poland, the Duke of Parma; nay, Henri the Great, had dreamed of her blue eyes and ripples of curling hair. "I should not refuse the Princess Arabella of England," he remarked to Sully, "if she were once declared heiress presumptive." The stern necessities of the Crown had doomed this royal lady to live an unwedded life.

Arabella had always been an object of speculation in foreign courts. She was a favourite in Rome and Madrid; and her religious views were thought to be rather Catholic in their bent. Philip regarded her as a friend of Spain.

This tendency on the part of foreign kings to busy themselves with her affairs was one chief cause of her being watched with unsleeping care by Cecil; and, now that Cecil was growing faint, by Suffolk and Northampton, with increasing fear. Lady Suffolk was anxious to have no rival in Philip's cabinet, which a royal princess, married and having issue, could not fail to be, whether she wished it to be so or not. A king's cousin, growing old in her single state, might be a person of the court, but she would not be a public power.

Enriched by the gold of Spain, Lady Suffolk had nearly as strong an interest as the King himself in compelling the Lady Arabella to live and die in her unwedded bliss.

When Arabella had passed her thirty-fifth year, the King, who had come to regard her settlement as a standing jest, was rude enough to tell her she was now free to marry anybody who would have her. She took him at his word. Rosalind had seen Orlando in the person of her young kinsman, William; a youth of twenty-three; a man of books and theorems; cold, sedate, and clever; given over-much to pondering on his birth, his poverty, and his family wrongs. For the Seymours, grandsons of Catharine Grey, sister and heiress of Queen Jane, inherited all the rights of that popular idol; so that after the King's issue, and the Lady Arabella, William and his brother Edward, Lord Beauchamp, were the nearest claimants to the crown.

That Seymour could be moved by noble passion his after life in the Civil War, through which, as Marquis of Hertford, he fought on the side of Charles the First, abundantly made known. His offer to be put to death instead of the King, has covered his name with such romantic light and colour, that the harsh and calculating lover of Arabella Stuart appears in the story like a different man. But Seymour's childhood had been spent in a bitter school. His family, one of the proudest in England, was a wreck. His father was a child of the Tower. His grandmother, Lady Catharine, died under the brand of an illegal union. Nearly all his kinsmen for a hundred years had fallen to the axe. No man in the realm, not even of the Percy and the Howard families, could claim so large a share in the noble dust of St. Peter's Church. Under the flags of that darksome pile lay the ashes of his kindred by the male and by the female lines; of Edward, Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector of England; of Thomas, Lord Seymour of Sudeley, Lord High Admiral; of Henry, Duke of Suffolk; of Lord Thomas Grey; of the Nine-days' Queen; to all of whom he and his brother Edward were immediate heirs. His grandfather, the aged Earl of Hertford, had been ruined by a monstrous fine. His father had been tainted in his birth, and been compelled to fight in the courts of law for more than thirty years, in order to establish his mother's fame.

That father had passed away, worn out by rage and sorrow, leaving his sons to the care of a feeble old man, whose spirit had been broken more than forty years.

William, the younger son, with his fortunes all to seek, could not foresee that his brother would die without issue and leave him heir. He was poor, and wanted to be rich; obscure, and wanted to be great. He looked around him in the world, and saw no way in which a younger son could rise so quickly as by marrying a royal bride.

When the court was at Woodstock, Seymour was at Magdalen College, and in the leafy groves of that royal park Rosalind and Orlando rambled unobserved, their ages and their kinship covering them from the malice of prying eyes and whispering tongues. The lady thought she was free to love, and Seymour was sedate beyond the warrant of his years. At thirty-six a lively woman, who has lived among poets and adorers, is pretty sure to be quick in feeling and susceptible to fire. When Arabella rambled in the park of Woodstock, she was in the mood for love; and the youth of twenty-three summers, seeing where the woman of thirty-six was weak, found his way into her room, threw himself at her feet, and made her an offer of his heart. Such words had not been heard by her of late. The poets praised her beauty, the courtiers extolled her wit; but no one dared to speak to her of love, since it had been always said at court that James would never allow his cousin to enjoy the consolations of a wedded life. She bent her round blue eyes upon him, and raised the enamoured youth into her arms.

Informed by spies of what was going on in Lady Arabella's room, Northampton caused her gentleman-usher and her lady-in-waiting to be seized and committed close prisoners (March, 1610); while he placed the lady herself in charge of Lord Knyvet, the man who had arrested Fawkes in Parliament Place. Nothing could be proved against her, for nothing illegal had as yet been done; and in some respects the rumours which had got abroad came back to her in grace. The King bethought him of her state; a woman debarred the privilege of her sex; a royal princess, with a scant provision and a load of debts. He sent her a box of plate, he gave her a thousand marks to pay her people, and he settled on her a pension of sixteen hundred pounds.

But she was now in love, and money would not stay the beatings of her heart. On Candlemas-day—seven weeks after her first arrest—she received William Seymour in her private room at court, and pledged him her troth in a way which, in her own opinion, made her his lawful wife.

When the news of what they had done came out, and Seymour was called before the Council to answer for the outrage of betrothing himself to the King's cousin without the King's consent, he treated the affair with cool and provoking scorn. He was poor, he said, and wanted means. He was a younger brother, he said, and wanted rank. He knew that the lady he loved was great, and from her style of living he thought she must be rich. As a young man, having his way in the world to make, he felt justified in trying to win her. But he did not mean to offend the King. He fancied that she had her sovereign's leave to marry: if his Majesty raised objections, he would proceed no farther in the match. No contract had been made between them, such as binds betrothed persons to each other; nor had either the lady or himself ever dreamed of proceeding to betrothal without the King's consent.

The King was pleased with words so frank and loyal; and on Seymour promising to forego his suit, the scandal died away. When quizzed about her youthful adorer, the lady took the jest with a laughing grace, and seemed to be more intent on masques than marriage. On the creation of Henry as Prince of Wales, a gallant masque was offered by the Queen, in which Arabella, dressed in shells and corals, played a nymph of the Trent. She was an admirable artist, and the court was giddy with her praise. The young Prince loved her; the Queen was always at her side; and, but for Northampton and Lady Suffolk, the King himself would hardly have treated her like a brute. So far as money could soothe her grief she had no reason to cry out, for, in addition to his previous gifts, the King made over to her a license to sell wines and usquebaugh in Ireland for a term of one-and-twenty years—a privilege worth not less than a hundred thousand pounds.

The young dissembler held his tongue.

Three or four months slipped by without much trouble to the pair, when Seymour, who was vainly expecting the King to yield, took his sharp cousin, Edward Rodney, into his confidence; telling him of his secret contract, and of his resolution to marry the King's cousin, cost her what it might. He made Rodney swear to keep his counsel, and to help him by his suit and service when the time of action should arrive.

A month after Lady Arabella had been tickling the court gossips by her garb of shells and corals, Seymour called on his cousin Rodney, to tell him of his plans and to seek his help. The two young men dropped down to Greenwich, where they found a poor priest, John Blague, who was willing to perform the rite; and early next day (July 9, 1610) the young fellows went up into the lady's chamber in the palace, where the nuptial knot was tied by Blague, in the presence of her two gentlemen, Hugh Crompton and Edward Reeves, beyond the power of kings and councils to untie.

Here then, at length, a genuine Arabella Plot had risen to perplex the court. When the secret came out the King was furious with the Seymours, feeling that he had been cozened and deceived, as well as outraged and defied. The aged Earl, who had ruined himself by marrying Catharine Grey, was thought by James to have urged this new and more dangerous suit, so as to bring the family of Seymour one step nearer to the throne than they already stood. But the abject protests of the broken man appeased him. Orders were given to arrest the conspirators, of whom Rodney alone escaped pursuit and capture. Blague, the priest who had married them for a fee, was committed to the Gate-house in Westminster; Crompton and Reeves, the gentlemen who stood by as witnesses, were sent to the Marshalsea in Southwark. The bride was given in custody to Sir Thomas Parry, who lodged her in a fine house on the Thames near Vauxhall; while Seymour was placed in the house of Sir William Waad, Lieutenant of the Tower, until fitting apartments could be got ready for a man of his rank and taste.

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CHAPTER LX.

WILLIAM SEYMOUR.

THE bride and bridegroom, parted in the first hours of their honeymoon, took the blow in their several ways. Seymour lost his temper, and his partner broke her heart.

Seymour's chief trouble was the want of money, of which he had none, and his wife not much. Blue eyes would not pay his weekly bills, and Seymour's weekly bills were likely to be large. He wrote to his grandfather for an allowance; and, with the King's consent, Lord Hertford consented to allow him fifty pounds a quarter for his maintenance in the Tower. The rooms assigned to Seymour for his future home, were the handsome chambers in St. Thomas' tower, in front of Raleigh's Walk; but Seymour thought these chambers were cold and bare, needing much arras, plate, and furniture to give them a cheery look; so that while Rosalind was crying in Parry's fine house, refusing to be comforted in her grief, Orlando was wrangling with Waad about hangings and cups, about presses and stools. Tapestries were bought for him, and the chambers opening on the Thames were brightened with serge, with silver, and with books. To Waad's surprise, however, this prince with a thousand wants had not a single pistole in his pouch to pay for the things he ordered; and much to the Lieutenant's wonder, when he came to think of it in after times, this husband of a royal princess got into his debt. Sir William was not a man to pay for other people; and once he set his teeth, even in the tradesfolk's presence, against his haughty and exacting guest. Seymour, who wanted new tapestries for his sitting-room, induced Waad to order five pieces for him from Jenning the upholsterer, at ten pounds a-piece. One of these pieces Seymour cut across, so as to make it fit his fire-place; by which he destroyed it as an article of furniture for use in any other room. Waad, who had pledged himself thus far, declared that he would give his name no more.

Seymour was not nice in the art of helping himself to what he needed. The princess, now his wife, had a villa of her own at Hackney, and to this villa he sent for such things as he could not get from Waad; kitchen-stuff, linen, silver trenchers, candlesticks, drinking cups; and when his rooms had been duly brightened up (on credit), he took jaunty leave of the Lieutenant's house, and went to live in his chambers over Traitors' gate.

Those comforts of the flesh which Seymour prized so much had no great hold upon his wife. The bride was not closely kept; she was served by her own people; she had a garden to walk in; and no restraint was put on her use of books and pens. Her servants could come and go; her table was well supplied; she was in correspondence with her friends. But she felt no comfort in her freedom, since her soul was in the chamber on the wharf, where her husband, as she dreamt, was pining out his soul for love. She wrote to him in tender and moving tones, to which the young bridegroom answered her not a word. In fact, he saw that his marriage was a mistake of means. His wife was not rich; nor could she help him to become great. He had vexed the King to please her; and—she was thirty-seven years old.

When Arabella heard from him at all, it was through Smith, a servant, who told her that he had been ill. Then Rosalind snatched a pen and wrote, with her delicate banter, to her bridegroom in the Tower:

"I am exceeding sorry to hear you have not been well. I pray you let me know truly how you do, and what was the cause of it, for I am not satisfied with the reason Smith gives for it. If it be a cold I will impute it to some sympathy betwixt us, having myself gotten a swollen cheek at the same time with a cold. For God's sake, let not your grief of mind work upon your body. . . . In what state soever you are, it sufficeth me you are mine. . . . You see when I am troubled, I trouble you too with tedious kindness; for so I think you will account so long a letter, yourself not having written to me for this good while so much as how you do. But, sweet sir, I speak not this to trouble you with writing but when you please. Be well, and I shall account myself happy in being your faithful, loving wife."

Seymour was too busy for such tender and unprofitable humour; the winter passed and the summer came again without much writing to his wife. He was looking to himself, to his present comforts in the Tower, to his future rank and place at the royal court. He was writing to the lords of the Council, praying to be restored in grace, asserting that his health was ruined, and begging to be allowed the full liberties of his prison.

All the love, and nearly all the daring, were on the lady's side. Growing bolder as the days went by, she got into a barge, dropped down the river, and paid a visit to her husband, with whom she may have spoken through his grated window on the wharf. Such facts were sure to become known at court; this daring visit was reported at Whitehall; when the King gave orders that a dozen counties should be put between his romantic cousin and his impudent prisoner in the Tower.

Arabella was to be placed in charge of William James, Bishop of Durham, with orders to repair forthwith into the north, and there await his Majesty's pleasure; while Seymour was to be watched in St. Thomas' tower with a sharper eye.

And now came a strife between Solomon's craft and Rosalind's wit; a comedy in its course of deception and surprise; a tragedy in its conclusion of insanity and death.

Early in June (1611) the Court was fluttered by a message from Sir William Monson, dated from a tavern at Blackwall. This tough old sailor, taking boat for Billingsgate, on his own affairs, was told by his watermen that a swift barge, having some of Seymour's friends on board, had dropped down the river on the previous night. The barge had been lying off St. Katharine's Wharf. A boat was in attendance at the Tower stairs; a bundle of clothes had been thrown into this boat; at nightfall a man in a black wig and a carter's dress had come alongside; a parley had taken place between the carter and a young gentleman in the boat; the carter had gone away, and the young gentleman had told the watermen to pull for the barge. Some of the men engaged in the business were known to be Seymour's kinsfolk. Who could say whether Seymour himself might not have been that carter in the black wig?

Monson, a friend of Lady Suffolk, a partizan of the house of Howard, suspected that an escape was being attempted from the Tower, the defeat of which would be likely to make his fortune. Instead, therefore, of landing at Billingsgate, as he had meant to do, he bade his men pull lustily for Blackwall, where he jumped on shore, ran into the river-side tavern, and learned from the man who kept it that a young gentleman, or one who by his dress and figure wished to pass for a young gentleman, had come on the previous evening to his house on horseback, in company with a lady of middle age, and after staying in a private room for two or three hours had at last taken oars for Gravesend. He also learned that Lady Grey, a daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, had come down to Blackwall, from which she was pulled across to Greenwich. This Lady Grey was a cousin of Lady Arabella. Every word he caught was full of mischief. Pressing his host still further, he learned, that late on the previous evening, two gentlemen, dressed in the same sort of clothes, from rosette to plume, had come to Blackwall, one of them by land, the second by water; that they seemed to be looking for some one who was not there; that the youth who came by water had mounted a horse and ridden away, while the one who came by land had taken oars and put off from the wharf, as though he were following the young gentleman and the lady of middle age.

While Monson was extracting this news from his landlord, men from a vessel in the river stepped on shore. They had come up the Thames that day, and in reply to the Admiral's questions, they could tell him that a French barque, then lying in Leigh Roads, had taken a strange party on board and sailed at daybreak on the course for Calais. Sure that an escape was being made, and also pretty sure that Seymour was on board the French barque, he saw what a golden chance was thrown into his path. Of late he had been falling back. A reign of peace was not a reign in which men of his trade could thrive; and Monson had been vainly striving to obtain at court the prizes he could no longer obtain at sea. If Seymour had broken prison, the man who captured and brought him back would do a striking service, not only to the Howards, but to the King.

Familiar with the winds and currents of the Straits, he knew that the French barque, sailing from Leigh Roads at dawn, could not have passed the Foreland. The wind was high, and the water rough. The barque would then be rolling in the chops beyond Margate Sands. If the wind should keep in the same quarter, that barque would not be able to make the port of Calais before set of sun.

Quick in action as though he were on his quarter-deck, the brisk old sailor took his course. Throwing a few men into an oyster-boat, he pushed them down the Thames. Mounting a good rider, he sent off a message to the admiral commanding in the Downs. Writing a letter to Cecil, he informed the Secretary of his news and then pulled over to Greenwich, where he asked for the use of a royal ship.

His high rank in the navy made his wish in these matters a command; so that in less than an hour after his coming to the inn-door at Blackwall, he had opened the chase of his unknown fugitive by water and by land.

CHAPTER LXI

THE ESCAPE.

ARABELLA had done her part, as women always do, with singular and successful art. Before she was carried away from Lambeth she had procured the liberation of her servant, Hugh Crompton, from the Marshalsea. Among her many merits, this royal lady had the grace of making all her people love her. By nature soft and kind, she made companions of her attendants, from whom she could not bear to part, still less to see them suffer on her account. When Reeves and Crompton were in prison, she sent to the Marshalsea almost every day to learn how they were doing, and wrote most pressing letters for them to the Council and to the Queen. She seemed to suffer more pain for her people than for herself.

The Council was hard of heart, for the Howard party was anxious that the King's cousin should never more regain her old ascendancy at court; but when plague broke out in the Marshalsea, her prayers became so urgent that they could not be denied; and when she was ordered into the north country, Crompton, as the man most used to her ways, was suffered to share what was understood by Lady Suffolk as her banishment from the English court.

Before going north, the lady made one last appeal to the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench and the

Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. In marrying, as every woman was free to do, she conceived that she had done no wrong; but if others thought so, she demanded to be tried for her offence, and punished according to the law. "If your lordships," she wrote, "may not, or will not, of yourselves grant me the ordinary relief of a distressed subject, then I beseech you to become humble intercessors to his Majesty that I may receive such benefit of justice as both his Majesty by his oath (those of his blood not excepted) hath promised, and the laws of this realm afford to all others." She added, with equal modesty and dignity, "And though, unfortunate woman that I am, I should obtain neither, yet I beseech your lordships retain me in your good opinion, and judge me charitably, till I be proved to have committed any offence, either against God or his Majesty, deserving so long restraint or separation from my lawful husband."

The Lord Chief Justices to whom she wrote were Sir Thomas Fleming and Sir Edward Coke, courtiers and creatures of the Howards; her prayer remained unheard; and warrants were issued by the Council for Sir Thomas Parry to bring her to Whitehall.

She protested against this seizure, and had to be removed by force.

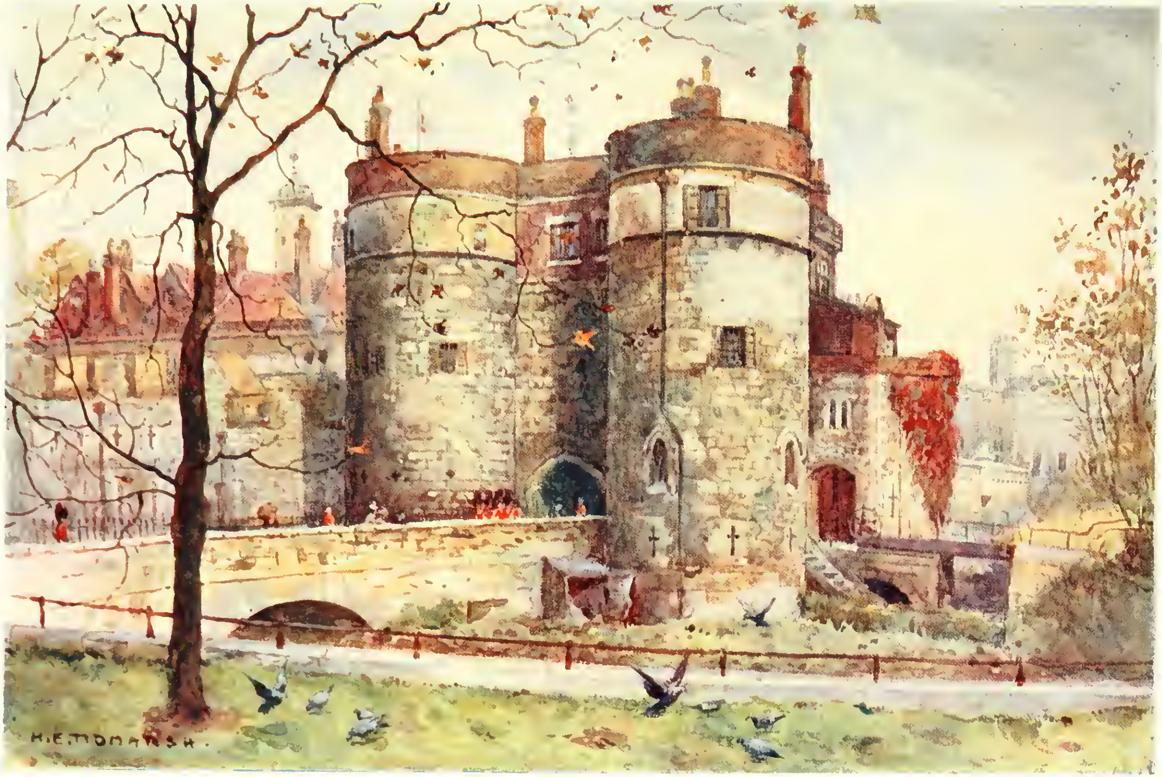
Rightly or wrongly, the lady conceived the idea that she, a free woman of the blood royal, was being treated with lawless violence by a faction in her cousin's court, against whom it would be fair in her to use whatever stratagems her wit could devise.

The courtiers, reading her prayers and protests, and fearing to place her at the Council table, where some sudden burst of feeling might touch the King and cause him to change their plans, requested the Bishop of Durham to go in person to Vauxhall, and there receive her into charge. The lady was in no mood to submit in silence to this change. The Bishop produced his letters. She refused to stir. With tender art, for the

Bishop was a godly man, he tried to soothe her rage by telling her the story of patient saints, and of prisoners far less happy than herself. She wept, she raved, she fainted on the floor. At length they picked her up, placed her in a coach, and carried her to the Thames, and so through the town to Highgate Hill. Scant preparation had been made for her reception on the road. A cold March wind was blowing in her teeth. The inns were mean and full of people, and her escort was instructed to hurry her along. She had to be carried in a litter, in which she fainted thrice before they reached the Hill. Moundford, her physician, gave her cordials to restore her strength, but late in the afternoon he began to fear she would not live, and in a fainting state she was put to bed. A rider was sent back to court, where Suffolk, suspecting that her sickness was put on, sent Sir James Croft, a court physician, to see her. Sir James reported that her sickness was not feigned. Still force was tried to make her go. Sergeant Mynors, one of her escort, lifted her out of bed into the coach, and bore her to Barnet, where Moundford declared that she could not travel, and to carry her farther would be murder. Mynors himself was frightened when he saw her lying on the floor, her face like death, and her tunic stained with blood.

The good Bishop wrote from Barnet to the lords, describing her sickness, and asking for orders what to do. The doctors and parsons who came to see her told but one story. She was unfit to travel; and when the King perceived that he could not drive her on without the risk of killing her on the road, he gave an order for her to rest a month and then go forward towards the north.

A cottage was accordingly hired for her from Thomas Conyers, at East Barnet, and here, in the fresh air, her spirits began to revive. She kept her counsel well, so that only her trusty maid, and her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BYE-WARD TOWER.

faithful Crompton, knew how she really was in health. The Bishop went north to prepare her chamber, leaving her in the charge of Croft. Moundford rode backward and forward between the Heath and Charing Cross, where the Council pressed him to compel her to go on. He begged for another month, but the lords refused her another day. As Croft and Moundford seemed to them too yielding, they sent for Mynors, who told them the lady was not fit to travel; but they cut the keeper short by saying it was the King's absolute will that she should go at once to Durham, even if she rode no more than a mile a-day.

She wrote to the King and Queen. She made a friend of Mrs. Adams, the wife of a clergyman who came to see her. She wrote to her aunt Mary, Countess of Shrewsbury, who espoused her cause, to the peril of her freedom and estate. Her uncle Shrewsbury was a member of the Council; but his brain was too weak for influence on a board at which Cecil and Northampton sat. In her distress of mind for her niece, Lady Shrewsbury appealed to the new favourite, Robert Carr, now Viscount Rochester; but the young minion of royal grace was in love—in most disloyal love—with Suffolk's beautiful daughter, Lady Essex, and therefore was a slave to that powerful peer. Taking his cue from Northampton, the Nestor of his lady's house, Carr answered the Countess of Shrewsbury that he could not solicit the King in a matter which was unfit for her to ask and for the King to grant. Northampton wrote an account of this "faithful and sound refusal" to the King.

But Mary, Countess of Shrewsbury, was not a woman to yield at once. She knew how near the throne her kinswoman stood, and she hoped that Seymour and Arabella would leave a son to inherit their claim, and perhaps to wear the crown. By fair means, if it might be, by foul means, if it must be, she resolved that the young man and his wife should come together in some country beyond the reach of James.

Sending for Hugh Crompton, she told him of her hopes, her means, and her designs. She hoped to unite the husband to his wife. She had plenty of money; and she fancied that, on spending gold enough, she could buy the means for their escape into France. Crompton listened to her speech. With wit and money, anything might be done; servants corrupted, disguises bought, confederates paid, and vessels hired for flight. Crompton went to East Barnet, and told his mistress all that Lady Shrewsbury had opened her mind to say. The lady leapt to her offer, and with ready wit suggested the particulars of a plan for their joint escape into France; she from her keepers at Conyers' house, and Seymour from his lodgings in the Tower. Her servant, seeing the way laid out, engaged to prepare disguises, to arrange for horses, and to hire a skipper in the Thames. They only wanted money, and money the Countess undertook to find. Great sums—not less than twenty thousand pounds in all—were quickly raised and poured into Arabella's lap, "to pay her debts." Jewels were bought; a cloak and hat, a rapier, and a pair of cavalier's boots, were carried in secret to Conyers' house. In her private room, the faithful Hugh instructed his lady how to wear her hat and sword.

Money was sent to Seymour in the Tower, with details of a plan for his own escape. Young Rodney entered with all his soul into Crompton's scheme. Two suits of clothes, exactly alike from rosette to plume, were made; for the cousins were of an age and size to match; and these two suits were to be used on the day of flight. A second disguise was got for Seymour, in the shape of a carter's frock and whip. Batten, his barber, made him a great black wig. One Monsieur Corvé, a French skipper, was hired to lie in the Leigh Roads, and wait for certain parties, who would give him a pass-word, and come on board his barque.

Croft now told his patient she must resume her journey towards the north, where the Bishop of Durham was waiting to receive her into his charge. Every one about Conyers' cottage pitied her, even those who had to answer for her; and on the physician's plea, a second month was given her to recruit her strength. That month was May; a month of rare delight on the breezy heights of Barnet. She seemed to be winning back her health. At once playful and meek, she lulled suspicion; and Croft, believing that his patient wisdom had prevailed over her fretful spirit, advised the Council that she was now resigned to the King. When, late in May, he pressed her, in the King's name, to resume her journey towards the north, she named Monday, the third of June, as the day on which she would be ready to set forth.

About four o'clock on Sunday afternoon, dressing herself in cloak and hat, drawing on a pair of cavalier's boots, slinging a sword by her side, and putting her jewels into her pocket, Rosalind came out of Conyers' cottage with Mrs. Bradshawe, the daughter of a gentleman of East Barnet, followed by William Markham, one of the gentlemen of her suite. A walk of half-an-hour brought them to a lonely inn, where Crompton was waiting with horses ready saddled for their flight. Sick with hope and fear, poor Rosalind gave her hand to a groom, who helped her to mount; and as the party pricked away towards London, this lad turned round to his fellow-groom and said, "Poor young gentleman! he will hardly reach London alive." A quick ride brought the blood into her cheek; but on reaching the inn by the river at Blackwall, where she expected to find her husband safe and well, she almost fainted from her horse. It was six o'clock, and Seymour was not come. Boats were hired for Woolwich; the luggage was put on board; the men got ready to start; but

Rosalind would not stir from the Blackwall inn until Orlando came. A precious hour was lost; the village clock struck seven. Mrs. Bradshawe urged her to go on board, as the pursuers would be soon upon their track. The oarsmen grew impatient, for night was coming on. Still she would not stir from the little parlour of the water-side inn. What to her was liberty unless her husband was at her side? A few minutes more might give him his only chance.

When the church clock chimed eight, the watermen told her she must either go at once or wait until another day. They could hardly now make Woolwich Reach before dark, and they did not care to be out on the Thames all night. With a heavy heart she stepped on board, and the boat pushed off from the Blackwall stair.

CHAPTER LXII.

PURSUIT.

LADY ARABELLA and Mrs. Bradshawe were in the leading boat; Crompton and Markham, her gentlemen-in-waiting, in the second. They had with them a heap of diamonds, pearls, and rubies, and a sum of three thousand pounds in gold. Five minutes after they left Blackwall stair the sun went down; but they had still an hour of light; and when they were fairly in the stream she asked the men to carry her past Woolwich, and put her on shore at Gravesend, which they were willing enough to do for a purse of gold. At the second port she found a skipper, who agreed, for a high fee, to take her down the river to Leigh Roads, where Corvé's barque was to take them all on board. In the dark summer night they passed the barque without seeing her, and in Leigh Roads found a ship at anchor, which they hailed. The master of this ship, John Bright, bound for Berwick, refused Arabella's offer of a large sum of money to carry her into France. Bright told her that a ship was lying in the Roads about two miles up the river, which ship she fancied must be Captain Corvé's barque. Turning back in her search she hailed the strange vessel; and finding her to be French, she made herself known to Corvé by the pass, and in a few seconds her party was taken up on board.

The wind was cross. For four days past it had been blowing east by south; the sea was running high, and, with the best of fortune, the barque could hardly have passed the Foreland and got her tack. But Corvé made no haste; for his royal passenger begged him to hang below the Nore, in the hope of picking up Seymour from some craft. Their plans were so well arranged, that she was sure her husband had left the Tower. Some accident had spoiled their meeting at the Blackwall tavern; but she felt no doubt that he was somewhere tossing in his boat at sea. She lost some hours in reaching the narrows, and long before they got into open water in front of Calais, their happy chance was gone.

A swift war-ship, the Adventure, had been sent from the Downs on Monson's order, to sweep the Straits. The Adventure appeared in sight. The French coast was near, and the barque threw out her sails; but a boat was lowered from the Adventure to give chase. The princess wept; the captain fought his best; but after thirteen shots had been fired into him, Corvé struck his flag and gave up his freight.

Seymour had taken care of himself. By the help of Rodney, he procured his black wig and his yellow frock. Feigning sickness, he kept his room in the Water gate. The Lieutenant had no conception that Seymour was such a deep and wily youth; and even when the bird had flown away from his cage, he was chiefly vexed at finding that the fellow had cheated him of his perquisites by secretly sending away from his lodgings the best of Arabella's plate!

On the Saturday night, when everything was ready at East Barnet for the lady's flight, Rodney went to a house near St. Catharine's hospital, kept by a woman with whom he had formerly lodged, and hired a room, on the pretence that he felt himself a little unwell and wanted a change of air. He sent his man to this woman's house with a great bundle of clothes, which were laid in his room. Early on Sunday morning the man came again, with a fresh bundle, and asked whether his master had yet arrived. Two strange persons called during the day, one of them a female, who stayed in the house until all the stuff brought in by Rodney's man was carried to a boat at St. Catharine's wharf.

All that day, poor Seymour was thought to be lying ill in bed. Just at sun-down, a cart drove up to the Water gate, when Seymour, leaping out of bed, put on his carter's frock and wig, snatched up a whip, stepped out into the street, and drove the horses along Water Lane through the Byeward gate.

Rodney was waiting for him with a horse and boat near Tower Stair. Seymour mounted the horse and rode away, while Rodney stepped on board and pulled for Blackwall; where the two men met again about nine o'clock. Seymour had changed his dress, and the landlord of the inn observed that the cousins were dressed alike from head to foot. Seymour soon learnt that his wife had come and gone. The young men parted company; Rodney riding away to baffle pursuit; while his friend and cousin dropped down to Leigh. The French barque having sailed, Seymour made no effort to follow his wife, but finding a collier beating about the narrows, he bribed the master to take him on board and land him in Ostend.

When the crew from the Adventure leaped on board Corvé's barque, Arabella came forward, made known her rank, and yielded herself a prisoner to the King. They asked her where Seymour was; to which she answered, smiling, that she had not seen him, and could not tell them; but she hoped he had got across into France; and said that her joy at his escape consoled her for her own mishap.

Passengers and crew being taken on board the Adventure, and brought into the Downs, Sir William Monson despatched a messenger with his news to court. The King was cross, and Northampton inflamed his passions; but Cecil, an advocate always for the middle term, prevailed with James to adopt a more moderate course than Northampton would have had him take. Northampton tried to make the King believe that Arabella's flight was a deep political plot, and he drew a fanciful picture of a series "of plots that were to follow" her escape into France. Cecil laughed this nonsense out of court; yet the proceedings taken against the suspected persons were sharp enough. Even before Monson had brought his prisoners up the Thames, a number of men and women had been committed to the various jails; the Countess of Shrewsbury to the Tower, Sir James Croft to the Fleet, Mr. Adams and Dr. Moundford to the Gate-house, the barber Batten to the Keep. When the captives arrived in town, the King gave orders that his fugitive cousin should be lodged in the Tower, and the apartments chosen for her were the chambers occupied by Margaret Douglas, the common grandmother of Arabella and the King. William Markham was sent to the Marshalsea, Hugh Crompton to the Fleet. Corvé was lodged in Newgate, then much used as a sailors' prison. Edward Rodney, seized near London, was put in the Gate-house, questioned by Northampton, and committed to the Tower. Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury, and Edward, Earl of Hertford, were restrained to their several homes.

The proceedings lasted long, and wore out many lives. One by one the minor agents in the escape either died in prison or gained their liberty by telling what they knew. Croft, who knew nothing, was discharged from the Fleet; while Dr. Moundford and Mr. Adam, who knew little more than Croft, were liberated from the Gate-house. As nothing could be learned from Rodney, he was suffered to go abroad, where he joined his cousin Seymour at the court of France.

Crompton and Markham, the companions of Arabella's flight, were brought from the Fleet and Marshalsea to the Tower, and pressed by questions in the torture-chamber, until they told some part of what they knew.

When niece and aunt were brought before the lords and questioned as to the escape, Arabella was gentle and yielding, while her aunt was haughty in manner and hot in speech. Why, asked the Countess of Shrewsbury, was she brought before that secret and unjust tribunal? Northampton bade her answer the questions put to her. She would not answer. She would not be tried in private. She appealed to the law. If they had evidence against her, let them produce it in open court. Northampton stormed upon her. Was that the way to deal with the King's council? Still prouder and more scornful, she demanded to know whether that was the way to treat a lady of her rank?

Lady Shrewsbury bound herself by a great oath never to reveal the particulars of her niece's flight.

CHAPTER LXIII.

DEAD IN THE TOWER.

WHEN Lady Arabella was taken on board the French barque, she had three thousand pounds in gold, and a great wealth of rings and bracelets in her trunks and on her person. This money, and these jewels, the property of Lady Shrewsbury, had been seized by the King, and the money had been used for paying the cost of Arabella's capture. But a heap of gold and a case of jewels were the smallest parts of Lady Shrewsbury's loss. This wealth was Arabella's force; and the raising of so large a sum of money was proof of Lady Shrewsbury's share in her flight. But neither niece nor aunt could be drawn into confessing each other's guilt; and after many of Northampton's attempts to snare them had been foiled, the two ladies were sent back to the care of Sir William Waad.

Rich enough to buy herself every indulgence, Lady Shrewsbury procured a suite of rooms in the royal quarter, consisting of the Queen's old lodgings; three or four chambers in which she could live and walk about; but worn by time, and bare of hangings, furniture, and wainscots; the windows being broken, the doors unhung, the ceilings open to the sky. Not a single servant of her own was suffered to be with her. Gilbert, her husband, wrote to Cecil, who obtained for her some relaxation of the rules. But the lady would not help her friends; her stomach was said to be too high for a private person, even of her exalted birth. A servant was allowed, as an especial grace, to wait upon her. The ceiling of her room was mended, so as to keep out wind and rain. But the Countess was tormented in her prison by Northampton, who came to the Tower in the interest of his new tool and dupe, Sir Robert Carr, now hungering for escheats and fines. Carr was eager to get Sherborne Castle from Raleigh; a part of the thirty thousand pounds from Percy; a case of Arabella's diamonds; a lump of Lady Shrewsbury's vast estate; and the hoary pander to this young man's passions came down to see the prisoners, one by one, to pry into their ways of life, and find some pretext for proceedings yet more harsh. Every one in the Tower had cause to regret his coming. Raleigh and Percy were confined to their cells. Lady Shrewsbury was insulted in her apartments; and the Lady Arabella suffered from the incivilities of Waad, an officer only too anxious to please his patrons at the court.

The darkening crimes and breaking strength of that bad old man were hurrying him to an end; but whether that end would be a felon's dungeon or a councillor's grave, the nimblest wit in London could not tell.

Lady Shrewsbury, saucy and silent with the lords, was brought before a Select Committee of the Privy Council, at York House, the residence of Ellesmere, to answer for not answering; an offence which Northampton said amounted to a contempt of the King. They told her that Crompton had confessed to all she had done in the marriage and escape of her niece, and they wished her to supply information on certain points. She would not speak to these points. She pleaded her vow—she pleaded her peerage. If she were charged with an offence she claimed to be tried by her peers, according to the law, and in open court, not by a Committee of the Council, sitting in a private room.

Four of the judges, consulted on her case, subscribed to a view of the actual law, which, on a sentence being passed in the Star Chamber, would have laid her open to a fine of twenty thousand pounds, and imprisonment during the King's pleasure. That a verdict could be gained against her in the Star Chamber, if promoted by the Council, who could doubt? Yet the Countess was not frightened into speech. Sent back to the Tower, she lived on, year by year, in her old defiant mood, until her enemy Northampton died and the "Friends of Spain" were broken and dispersed.

Seymour amused himself in Brussels and Paris, wrote abject letters to King James, and squabbled with Waad about the plate and hangings he had left behind him in St. Thomas's tower. In less than six months he forgot his wife, and almost forgot his debts. Waad wrote to Cecil, that the flown bird had left nothing behind him of his own, since the best things in his rooms had been either fetched from the Lady Arabella's house or taken from the Lieutenant's store. A few things he had bought from tradesmen, but for these things he had never paid.

In the chamber which her grandmother Margaret had occupied in the Tower, poor Rosalind, having lost her all for love, remained a prisoner to her cousin five years. Some of her letters, written from the Tower to the King, have been preserved; tender and winsome letters, full of sad humour and wife-like grace. Her pleas were simple. When the King had told her to marry whom she pleased, she thought herself free. She allowed her heart to become engaged. Her lover pressed her, and she plighted him her troth. That act of plighting made them, in her conscience, man and wife. Before she learned that the King objected to her match, the deed was done. If she had given offence, it was because she had been driven to choose between the law of God and the law of man. "Most humbly I beseech your Majesty," she wrote, "to consider in what miserable state I should have been, if I had taken any other course; for my own conscience witnessing before God that I was then the wife of him that now I am, I could never have matched with any other man." She signed her letters "A. S.," which luckily answered to either Arabella Stuart or Arabella Seymour. But the King was dead to her sorrow. Trying him on every side; by turns gay and cheerful, sad and submissive; she appealed to his pity, to his pride, to his affection; and she tried him on every side in vain. When the "Queen of Hearts" was married to the Palsgraf of the Rhine, poor Rosalind hoped that her cousin's heart would open to her woes. "Mercy, mercy! for God's sake, mercy!" was the burthen of her daily prayer. The King was deaf.

In her lonely chamber she plied her needle on a canvas which she meant to send as a remembrance to the King; a dainty piece of labour, to have touched a kinsman's heart. But James would not accept her present. Then she fell sick, and pined in her room, and wandered in her thoughts.

The rules under which she lived in the Lieutenant's house were harsh, and even in her days of sickness they were not relaxed. Waad knew his masters, and guessed their minds. No news, he felt assured, could reach Northampton's ear so welcome as that of Arabella's death; and hence, when his functions gave him power to trouble his unpardoned captive, he pressed against her with all his weight. He refused to let her servants wait upon her. He compelled her to eat the ordinary prison fare. She asked for posset, and for clothes befitting a sick room and a lady who kept her bed; but she asked for these indulgences in vain. In her search for help, she turned to her bitterest foe at court, and in a plaintive letter told Northampton of her misery in the Tower. "I have been sick," she wrote, "even unto the death; from which it hath pleased God miraculously to deliver me; but find myself so weak, by reason I have wanted those ordinary helps whereby most others in my case, be they never so poor, are preserved alive—at least for charity." She had little hope from Northampton, and her note was more a menace than a prayer. In words direct enough, she told him that the privations under which she lay in prison would be not only "the certain," but "the apparent" cause of her death. She warned him, that if either he, or his nephew Suffolk, had "possessed the King with such opinions of her as should cause her to be restrained until help came too late," she knew her course. "I dare die," she added, "and oppress others with my ruin, if there be no other way."

The strain was now too great for her feeble strength to bear. Her tender musings passed into fierce convulsions; and when her doctors had chased the agony away, her mind was found to be a wreck. Rosalind was become Ophelia!

Days, months went by in hopeless waste of love and life. She lost all sense of passing things, and prattled in her madness like a child. The Lieutenancy of the Tower was changed; a more unscrupulous tool of Lord Northampton coming to rule over her; but she took no heed of what was going on. Some friends she found, in the Tower and beyond the Tower; men who pitied her, and would have given their lives to help her; but these were not the great ones of the earth. Palmer, a divine of the English Church, and Crompton, her faithful servant, put their heads together, and, in the summer of 1614, in the third year of her imprisonment, contrived a plan for her escape. It was a wild design, which led to nothing, except their own arrest and imprisonment, a letter of congratulation from Northampton to Carr, and a resolution on the part of James to guard her better in the time to come.

The rumours of her proposed escape were useful to Northampton in drawing people's eyes and thoughts away from a frightful drama which had just been closed in the Bloody tower.

She lived a year after Crompton's attempt had failed; tenderly drooping day by day; always gentle, sometimes playful, never morose; now plying her needle through the flowers, now touching her well-worn lute, and humming her evening song, until at length the weary woman fell asleep.

In the dead hours of an autumn night her ashes were taken from the Tower, and laid in that Abbey which was the tomb of all her race; laid beside all that remained of her grandmother, Margaret Douglas, and her great-aunt, Mary Queen of Scots; with neither line nor stone to mark the spot in which she sleeps.

Seymour lived abroad, keeping his eye on events, and hoping to come back, which he was now convinced he could never do while his consort was alive. He never wrote to her, never sent her token of his love. He heard that she was sick, he heard that she was crazed; but Paris was gay; and nothing in her fortunes seemed to touch his young and calculating heart. When he heard that she was gone, he threw himself upon James's mercy, implored his pardon, and obtained permission to return. Attaching himself to Charles, he became that prince's councillor and friend; fighting at his side through the Civil War, and making at its close that theatrical offer of being put to death for his King, which is the best remembered of his feats. But to make things safe whichever side should win, he took a second wife from the popular side; marrying Lady Frances Devereux, sister of Lord Essex, the great Parliamentary general. Seymour kept his head and his estate, and when Charles the Second came back to London he received the reward of his many virtues in his elevation to the rank of Duke.

It is not known that Seymour ever paid for the hangings supplied by Jenning at ten pounds a-piece for his comfort in St. Thomas' tower.

Yet before the royal lady passed into her rest in the great Abbey, she heard that the hoary and wicked Earl, who had wrought her so much evil, was no more; that in his later time he was a loathsome object in all men's eyes; and that he was gone to his grave suspected of a hideous crime, for which, on proof and judgment given against him, he would probably have been hung.

CHAPTER LXIV.

LADY FRANCES HOWARD.

THE last and latest of the many tools by which Northampton worked his will at court was the beauty of his nephew's daughter, Lady Frances, the young wife of his ally, Robert Earl of Essex.

In the long line of our female criminals there is hardly one more fascinating and more odious than Lady Frances Howard, the daughter of Lady Suffolk. When she was yet a child of thirteen springs, she appeared at court in one of the parts of Ben Jonson's Masque of Hymen. A daughter of the house of Howard, she was chosen by Cecil and Northampton, as the first victim in a series of matches, by means of which they hoped to fuse into one great party four rival houses; the other victims of their policy being her elder sister, Lady Elizabeth, and her tiny sister, Lady Catharine. These girls were given in marriage by plotting greybeards to two boys and one old man; Lady Frances to Robert Earl of Essex, Lady Catharine to William Lord Cranborne; boys no bigger than themselves; whom they could neither love nor hate in that tender age; and Lady Elizabeth to William, Lord Knollys of Greys, a kinsman of the great Queen. The prize of this union of the four great houses of Cecil, Howard, Devereux, and Knollys, was to be the control of king, court, and government for a dozen years.

The King was thought to have made the match between Earl Robert and Lady Frances, and the wedding came off in a scene which was gay with all the gaiety of a court. The King and Queen were present. James, who gave away the bride, and heard Montagu bless the children, ran with them from the chapel to the masque, where they were dazed by the lights and company, by the ripple of Jonson's verse, by the surprise of Inigo Jones's sceneries, by the masquers' white plumes, and the ladies' ropes of pearl. When the feast was eaten and the romps were danced, the boy and girl, now man and wife according to the Church, were sent away to school. Lord Essex went abroad with his tutor, while his child-like bride went home to her mother's house.

Reared in the court of France, living much in Huguenot homes, the Earl grew up into a grave and religious youth; while the Countess, his bride, being trained under her mother's eye, grew up into a woman unspeakably venal and impure. A youth of parts and figure; soft in his ways, especially with the gentler sex; quick with fire and manhood; proud of his great name; inclined, like the old warriors of his house, to cleave his way, not by his wit but by his sword; Earl Robert grew up into a perfect knight, armed at all points with the courtier's grace, no less than with the soldier's art. During the five years which he spent abroad, he does not seem to have thought very much of that festive scene at the English court, and of that fair young face which had filled the galleries of Whitehall with light; and when he returned to London, after a long absence, to claim his wife, now grown into a lovely woman, he heard with equal surprise and pity that the fair young girl whom he had kissed and promised to love was thought by some of his family to have been led by her kinsmen into unwife-like ways.

The girl was cursed with the rarest gifts of person. Tall and lithe, with oval face, small pouting lips, straight nose, and masses of shining hair, she would have taken captive every heart without the aid of her brilliant eyes. If those said sooth who knew her best, those eyes were fired with a wondrous and wicked glow. They set the poets raving, drove the painters to despair, and even when they shone in eclogues only, furnished critics with the theory of what Jonson calls the poetic propagation of light.

Living with her mother Lady Suffolk, with her sister Lady Knollys, both of whom made wreck of their repute, she learned, while yet a child, to see the value of such gifts. A husband far away, of whom she heard as poring over strange books, as crossing swords with unknown sparks, was not the man on whom her fancy loved to dwell. Though young and noble, she heard that he was grave and proud, averse to courts, contemptuous of pomp and show, a soldier more like Grey than a cavalier like Carr. Unhappily for the girl, no friend was at her side in those perilous years who could have shown her a better way. Her mother had for many years been lost to all sense of shame. Of her elder sister, now the wife of a man old enough to be her grandfather, it is enough to say that she was (afterwards) that Countess of Banbury whose married life has been the subject of judicial inquiry ever since she died. From her father, and from the old man who was more to her than father, she had little more than venal counsels to expect.

During the dozen years of the new reign, the Howards had driven a thriving trade in honours and estates, though the ducal coronet of their house had not yet been won.

Henry, the Nestor of his family, was Baron Marnhill, Earl of Northampton, Constable of Dover Castle, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Lord Privy Seal, High Steward of Oxford, Knight of the Garter, a Commissioner for the Office of Earl Marshal, and Keeper of Greenwich Park. Among manors and castles which he had begged from James, was Castle Rising in Norfolk, the lordship of Ash in Suffolk, the manor of Buckland in Dorset, the manor of Clare in Salop, Wark Castle and the manor of Tyndale in Northumberland, the Chase of Baggeridge and White's-wood in Stafford. Besides his official salaries, he got a personal pension of two hundred pounds a-year for life; one hundred pounds a-year of the surrendered pension of Lady Walsingham; and a royalty on all the starch either made in England or imported from abroad. He had built a great palace at Charing Cross, which he called Northampton House, and a second great palace in the country which he called Audley End.

Thomas, his nephew and favourite, was Baron Howard of Walden, Earl of Suffolk, and Lord Chamberlain, with nearly as many pensions and perquisites as his uncle.

Since Cecil's death, no single courtier had been able to stand his ground against the Howards, whose high connexions and unscrupulous talents had made them every year more dangerous to the King. James loved them little, but he feared them much. He liked their supple knees and slimy tongues, but trembled when he thought of their riches, their experience, their ambition, and their greed. One thing about them gave him comfort—they were hated by his people; so that he had little doubt, if ever he should have to turn against them, that he could do so with the nation at his back. Northampton asked for the White Staff, the wand then borne by the Lord High Treasurer; and the King, not daring to give him that staff, on account of his religion and his unpopularity, put the Treasury in commission for six months. Then commenced a new series of intrigues, through which the hoary and wasting Earl expected to win his place. He threw out lures and hints, and played a most curious game of give-and-take. He favoured the reduction of Northumberland's fine, in order to catch the support of Lady Lucy's lover; and actively pursued his young crony, Lord Vaux, the nephew of Ann and Helen, until that pupil of Garnet was condemned to the loss of his estate and to imprisonment in the Fleet for life. He gratified the London mob by hanging Father Richards and Father Sahagun, two priests, who returned to England without license; at the same time, taking some pains to soften the surprise in Rome by sending his nephew Arundel to weep at the foot of the gallows on which the priests were hung. So well was his game played out, that the world began to talk of Northampton's "Protestant zeal," and for this outbreak of English virtue he was rewarded by the Dons of Cambridge, who added to his many offices and honours that of Chancellor of the University—a step which brought him sensibly nearer to the Staff.

Northampton, gazing on Lady Essex's lustrous eyes, began to dream of an alliance with the royal house; and this old man, who should have been her guide and stay in the path of honour, taught the poor child how to beam on the young prince, and blessed his stars when he observed how the warm boy flushed and trembled beneath her gaze. But Henry, though he liked to toy with the siren, never dreamt of asking her to be his wife. Too soon and easily he clipped her chains. Once, when she dropped her glove at his feet, a courtier drew his eye to the sign of favour; but he passed it by, saying, "No; it has been stretched by another."

The tale of Prince Henry and Lady Essex having been locked in a room may not be true; but Lady Suffolk and Lord Northampton had the sort of fame in the city which left them open to suspicion of the vilest acts. In that dozen years, during which they reigned at court, the tone of life in the upper ranks had undergone a change. To those who had seen the stately and decent court of Gloriana, that of her successor on the throne appeared like a cock-pit and a bear-garden. Fulk Greville, in a ripe old age, which was certainly not penitential and severe, described for the amusement of after times the vices of great lords and ladies as he saw them; a picture of courtly manners, to be mated only in the annals of some Cæsar in ancient Rome, some Regent in modern France. Lady Suffolk was no solitary queen of vice, nor was Northampton the only broker in his country's shame. All ranks seemed rotten; the finest ladies to wear their prices, so to speak, upon their sleeves. A royal closet, unclean with the litter and language of a kennel; galleries besieged by gamesters, pensioners and jades; ante-chambers choked by sorcerers, poisoners, and pimps; a garden walked by bravoes, ready for any service, however foul and dark, that stood beyond the hangman's reach; with a bald and febrile man of middle age presiding over the dice and drink, the sale and cozenage; scenes which were varied and disturbed by Lake's reports, by Montagu's divinity, and by Archie's broad grins:—such was the court in which the hoary and dying Northampton was seeking to obtain the Staff.

Having failed in his hope of catching the Prince of Wales, he turned his face elsewhere, and having made his calculations, taught his pupil how to bend her beautiful, burning eyes on Carr.

CHAPTER LXV.

ROBERT CARR.

ROBERT CARR was a Scottish lad of handsome person, for whom James had conceived a sudden and ridiculous whim.

The King, who could not live without having some youth about him whom he could pat and pinch, tickle and slobber, had cast his eyes in turn on Herbert and Hay, young fellows with flowing beards pink cheeks, and empty skulls, who rarely troubled their brains with anything worse than a masque and a saraband. He kept his darling for a time, and then dethroned him for some newer and fairer face; but the darling of a day was seldom so unlucky as not to retire ennobled and enriched. Hume, Herbert, Hay, were all created Earls.

The Countess of Suffolk, knowing that the King was blind to the beauty of women, laid herself out to supply him with removes of handsome boys. She spent her days in seeking for arch eyes, pink flesh, and graceful forms; and when she had found her Ganymede of an hour, she curled his locks and sweetened his breath to the royal taste. She taught these youths to leave politics alone; and to devote their talents to the service of beauty, as imaginary Knights of the Fortunate Isles, and to fight for such golden truths as—

Beauty supplies the world with valour;
None but lovers can be happy;
No fair lady ever yet was false.

Carr was the youngest of these curled and silken favourites. A page of Hume, he had spent some months in Paris, where he learned to dress and dance, to ride and run the ring. Coming to court he put on his best attire, and walked into the Tilt-yard, when the King was present, in a scarlet frock, a foam of lace, and an embroidered shirt. Contriving to be knocked over in the game, he caught the King's eye by his fall; and when James was told that the pretty boy was one of Hume's old pages, he carried him up into his room, put him into bed, and nursed him with his own hands, until the strength of a roe returned to his feet and the bloom of an apple to his cheek. Thus began his fortunes. In a few months the King dubbed him Sir Robert, paid his debts, put jewels in his ears, swore him of the bed-chamber, and promised him the Lady Ann Clifford for a wife.

Left to his own devices, Carr would have risen like Herbert and Hay, to set like Montgomery and Carlisle. A coronet, a rich wife, a house in town, a chase in the country, would have quenched his appetite for favour; but by the side of Carr stood a young man, poor as himself in purse, but richer in the gifts of wit, of policy, and of speech. This youth was Thomas Overbury, a member of the House of Commons, a Puritan in morals and in thought, if not in opinion, a poet, a prose writer, a politician of consummate power. These lads had come to court in company. Something in Carr had taken the fancy of his more intellectual mate; who, measuring James from head to heel, had seen his way to making use of Carr in his attempt to rise. Swearing a league of friendship, the two young men had come to Whitehall with an understanding that, in seeking a fortune which they were to share and share alike, Carr was to find beauty of person, while Overbury was to find strength of brain. They meant to make a figure in the world.

In their first five years at court they rose very high;

for Carr, who was to enjoy the pleasures, while Overbury was to exercise the powers, of the high station they might win, was lifted from the position of a private page to the state of an adviser, and the rank of a viscount. Overbury, careless of show, was satisfied with being dubbed a knight, and consulted in every affair of State. A man of subtle and commanding genius; equal to many kinds of work; with powers of mind which made him easy master of every craft, Overbury had raised Carr to the height on which he stood; but neither King nor Court as yet knew the strength of Overbury and the emptiness of Carr. While the new Viscount reigned at Court, Overbury was the actual minister of the Crown. "There was a time," said Bacon on the trial, "when Overbury knew more of the secrets of State than the whole council." What Bacon said afterwards other people knew at the time. In the City taverns, it was a pasquil that Carr ruled the King, and that Overbury ruled Carr.

To the outside world, the rise of this favourite was that of a shooting star. Who could tell where his flight would stop? He was now Viscount Rochester; he had the promise of an earldom; nay, a Marquisate of Orkney was likely to be his next birthday gift. In those years we had neither duke nor marquis in the country, and a Marquis of Orkney would be the highest person in James's court. There were hints of the King adopting him as a son. Here, then, was no passing favourite such as the world had seen in Herbert and Hay. These men were liked; but Rochester was all in all. After the death of Cecil, who had kept him in his fitting place as a gentleman of the bed-chamber, Carr seemed to be the only man of whose presence and advice the King was never tired. Acting on Overbury's lessons, and speaking the words set down for him, the raw Scottish lad achieved a certain popularity, not only in the closet but in the street. He had the name of a staunch Protestant, and the reputation of an enemy of Spain. If his life was not lovely, he was not more lax in morals than many who had less than half his tempters to resist. No man's name, no woman's fame, had yet been smirched by Carr. If men could say that his rise had been swift, his accumulation of riches sudden, they could add, with truth, that he had shown many of the virtues as well as some of the vices of a royal favourite. Even in temper, gracious in bearing, bountiful in disposition, he had gained admirers, even where he had not secured friends. A man of Overbury's gifts could not have worked with a fool. To the poets Carr was uniformly kind; both Jonson and Donne have written in his praise. Even Bacon, though he owed him nothing, was not unwilling to grace him with a masque. For the rest, his power to go wrong was checked by a feeble will.

For two or three years, this favourite had been watched and thwarted by Northampton, Knollys, and Suffolk, who saw that he was not as they were; though they crossed him less for his own sake than for that of Overbury, whose principles and talents they equally feared and shunned. On Cecil's death, a scramble had taken place at court, not only for the White Staff, but for the important post of Secretary of State. The place of Secretary, though of lesser dignity than that of Treasurer, was of more importance, since the holder of it was in daily intercourse with the King; and a man of active genius would be sure to make it the centre of every movement in the realm. The inner circle of the Council was now composed of three great peers, allied in blood and marriage; Northampton, his nephew Suffolk, and that nephew's son-in-law, Knollys; and these great peers, in seeking to gain these offices for their party, had the advantage of voting with a single voice. Northampton spoke, and the younger men obeyed. When they had got the staff put into commission, as the only thing that could then be done, they fought for the minor and nearer post of Secretary. Winwood, Wotton, Bacon, Lake, were mentioned, as men who could serve their country; but the King, though he did not like to say so in the outset, was resolved to have no other Secretary than Carr.

Now Carr in the King's closet, writing letters on public business, was, as Northampton felt, but another form of having Overbury for a master. Carr was Overbury's voice; and Overbury was an enemy of Spain. If Overbury were to shape the policy of James, Northampton and Suffolk would hardly be worth their salt.

Lady Suffolk had already tried her arts on Carr; but Overbury, whose morals were austere, though he hungered after power even more than his ally after flattery and female smiles, repelled her. Overbury had a difficult game to play; for Carr, though popular at court, was far from popular in the town. The qualities which took the King—his dainty face, his splendid garb, and his Lowland Scotch—provoked the people into scorn. The London crowd could not endure a Scot. Poor in purse, and quick in speech, his bold eye, his ready hand, his saucy tongue, disgusted men who either would not, or could not, see his nobler side. To them, his courage was the merit of a mastiff, his abstinence the virtue of a fox, his loyalty the cringing of a slave. Even his religious ardour pained them, as a passion in excess; and no reproach appeared to them severe enough for the roaring, rieving callant, who aped the fashion of a court in the midst of filth and rags. Now Carr, though handsome, civil, and well dressed, was still a Scot; and Northampton made the King believe, that to give him Cecil's post in the closet would provoke a rising in the streets.

Unable to have his way, the King declared that in the future he would act as Secretary of State himself.

Northampton was not deceived by James's move. He saw that Carr was rising in the world; and hungering after posts which none but Carr could give him, he was base enough, not only to dream of gaining him over to their party through his lovely niece, but shameless enough to teach that girl how to lay her beauty in his path.

The young lady did not need much training to go wrong. She knew the way too well. Only too early in her life she had found a priestess of indulgence in Ann Turner, the famous White Witch. Ann, who had been a lovely girl, was still a winsome woman; white, graceful, slender, looking like a lady of birth, a little faded from her prime. Even when she stood, years later, at the bar of justice, the poets could only sing—

> The roses on her lovely cheeks were dead.

Now, this White Witch professed, among other arts, to understand how to preserve youth, to kindle love, and to chill desire. In the task which Northampton set her, Lady Essex had need of all her charms. From Ann Turner, the fair Countess got one philtre to chill the man she called her husband, another to warm the man she wished to call her lover. When these philtres failed to work her ends, at least on Essex, who truly loved his wife, Ann took her noble pupil to a great magician living in a lonely house in Lambeth fields. This sorcerer was Simon Forman, a fellow known to be driving a brisk and profitable trade in potions, horoscopes, and charms. Forman had more to do with great ladies than Mayerne himself; and, as he impudently set down in his diaries, he took his payment from these dupes in various ways.

This knave supplied the young Countess of Essex with enchanted papers, a few wax puppets, a scarf full of white crosses, and a piece of human skin. Later on, he adopted her as his "daughter" in the black art, permitting her to call him "father," and giving her a scroll on which he had noted for her use a list of the principal imps in hell.

Lady Essex had scant need for magic. Carr was only too soon in love with her bright eyes, and asking no aid from Forman's scrolls and fiends. Northampton played Old Pandarus to this guilty pair, just as he had done when Cecil was the Troilus, Lady Suffolk the Cressida of his play. He put the young wife in the young favourite's way, and even lent them his house to meet in. Often beneath the roof, sometimes in the sight of that old man, they kissed and swore to each other to be true.

Suffolk, younger and less base than his uncle, forced his daughter to live in her husband's house. Essex, though grieving to see that his wife's heart was gone from him, never dreamt that her honour was also gone; and kind in temper as he was princely in gifts, he set himself to win once more the love which for the moment he saw that he had lost. She pouted, raved, and mocked him; hoping he would flash into anger and turn her out of doors. Her husband bore with these humours, thinking they were but the ways of young married girls. His wife was dark to him as night. Nor could two such natures as his and hers come nearer than they stood. He, pious and severe, rode to sermon; she, profligate and superstitious, went to mass. He loved the country, while she adored the town. Masques, balls, processions, priests, dress, sports and triumphs, all the things to which her heart lay open, he would have shunned for himself and for the woman whom he loved. Early hours, long rides through the summer woods, attention to the poor and sick, the duties of a country household, all that round of love and usefulness which Essex craved as the purest work that he could find on earth, his Countess flung at his feet in anger and contempt.

Ann Turner's service to her mistress did not end in the magician's study. She hired a house for her in the medical quarter of St. Paul's, near Amen Corner, in which she might meet her lover, unseen by watchful critics of the court. Carr was young and she was fair. No devil on Forman's list found more delight in doing wrong than Lady Essex. Yet, in the midst of all her profligacy, she was careful to make her game. Lord Rochester being the most powerful man at Whitehall, she made up her mind to share his power; not for a season only, but for life.

The obstacles in her path were vast. She had a husband to get rid of; Rochester, a friend to put away; and with these two men she was only too well aware that she would have to conduct a duel to the death.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE POWDER POISONING.

ESSEX, a man of high rank, was proud of his name, and quick to avenge affronts. How could she get rid of such a man? She thought of poison; she thought of steel; she thought of Holy Church. A divorce would be the best of all; but how could a divorce be got? The only plea to be set up in such a case as hers—that of nullity from the first—was one which no man likes to admit and few women like to urge.

Listening, now to Northampton, now to Ann Turner, she conceived a triple scheme for getting rid of the husband whose name she bore. She egged on her brother Henry to send him a challenge; she paid the Lambeth wizard to waste his strength by magic; she gave a diamond ring, with the promise of a thousand pounds, to Mary Wood, a Norfolk hag, renowned for ridding ladies of their inconvenient lords, for a philtre warranted to kill in three days. But all these efforts failed her. The King forbade the duel; the wizard's dolls and scarfs were powerless; and the Norfolk hag deceived her with a philtre which would not kill. When magic, steel, and poison failed her, she fell back on her idea of divorce.

While the Countess was poring through the ways and means for getting a divorce from Essex, the White Witch and some lesser agents of evil were employed in removing Overbury from her path. In spite of his high talents, Overbury lay open to such arts as Northampton's corrupt nature and Italian education had taught him to abuse. Pride of genius led him into unwise scorn of men who had been schooled to rise by paths more devious than his own. The very frankness of his opposition to Spain armed Northampton against him, while his nobleness of soul prevented him from seeing to what desperate shifts a man of such high rank could stoop. He overrated Carr; not his power of resisting money and favour; for there his friend was strong; but his power of resisting the more perilous trial of liquid eyes and a wanton tongue. A sense of original force, which, often as it was tried, had never yet failed him, gave to Overbury's native haughtiness an austerity and emphasis very hard to bear. The Queen complained of him; the King resented his scornful tone; and citizens wagered their golden angels as to which was the proudest, Raleigh, Overbury, or Lucifer. The prize was given to Overbury. None of the courtiers loved him, for he took no pains to please them. Weak on every side, except that of his intellect, he invited and defied Northampton's arts.

So long as Overbury thought his friend's intrigue with Lady Essex was the fancy of a day, he let it pass in silence; smiling grimly at the old man's baseness, in selling the honour of his house for a mess of pottage; but he felt that it would never do for him to let this fancy of a moment sink into a permanent madness of the heart; and when he saw that Carr was running after the siren day and night, he warned him gravely against her vicious wiles. He spoke too late. Calypso had sung her slave to sleep. A fact came out by accident to have startled him from his dream of enduring happiness with such a woman. Mary Wood, the Norfolk hag, was arrested for petty theft, and, in her rage at being abandoned by her noble patrons, confessed her name, her trade, and her employers. The story of the poisonous drug and the diamond ring was told; and the truth of her tale was confirmed by Richard Grimston, the pursuivant, on a very important point. This story was referred to the Council, in which her kinsmen sat; but the secret inquiry came to Overbury's ears, and roused him to take a decided course. With consummate art, for Carr was proud and hasty, not to be schooled too openly, he warned him against her alluring smiles; now tickling him with easy banter, now stinging him with grave advice. To show what sort of woman a man should seek in wedlock, he wrote his poem called The Wife; that gracious picture of holy love in contrast with unholy lust. A wise man, said the poet, first seeks in a wife—not beauty, rank, and wealth; fools seek for such things first; but the higher virtues of the soul. First, he hopes to find her good—then wise—then fit—and last of all comely. All that Lady Essex was, he urged his friend to shun. But Carr slept soundly in Calypso's lap, as deaf to the poet's verse as he had been to the Witch's charge.

Lady Essex and her Nestor now resolved that he must die. Their plans required his death. That he could stop their suit for a divorce, they knew; that he would use his power, they also knew. Less than his blood would neither serve their ambition nor appease their wrath. At first they thought of hiring an assassin. Unlike Essex, the poet was not a master of his sword; and Lady Essex sent to Greenwich for Sir David Wood, a soldier of fortune, who had been crossed by Overbury in a job. "I am told you have grievous wrongs against Sir Thomas Overbury," she began at once: "I am also told you are a brave gentleman. He who has wronged you, has wronged me. I should be glad to hear he is no more." Wood hung fire. They were alone in her chamber, and she quickly explained her hints. She told him that she wished him to kill Sir Thomas; she promised him a thousand pounds, and offered him the friendship of Carr and the protection of all her kin. Wood was willing, but only on conditions that Carr should come forward in person, and assure him before a witness of his safety when the deed was done. She promised that Carr should give that pledge. But she dared not ask her lover for such a promise; and sending for Wood once more, she told him she would pledge her own life for his safety, come what might. Wood answered bluntly, that he was not such a fool as go to Tyburn on a lady's word. "Why," urged the Countess, "the thing is easily done; he sups every night at Sir Charles Wilmot's house; stop his coach; drag him out, and run him through." The bravo shook his head and left her in despair.

Northampton hit upon a safer plan.

The King was not fond of Overbury; and the pages who were near him, taking Northampton's cue, began to fret his ear by telling him that the people who met in fairs and taverns made jests against him, saying that he could not rule his realm without Overbury, since Overbury found all the wit for Carr, and Carr found all the wit for him. James swore a big oath that Overbury should be sent abroad—as far as Moscow—if only to let folk see whether the King could not rule without his aid. Overbury declined to go. They had taken care beforehand that he should decline, and so offend the King; but he had only refused the task on Rochester begging him not to go, since the proposal was a trick of their enemies to put the seas between them. Thus, he declined; when James, incensed at his refusal of so high a trust, gave orders for his instant arrest.

Overbury was lodged in the Bloody tower.

Out of sight, the poet soon fell out of Carr's remembrance. How far Rochester consented to his murder is uncertain; though it is clear that many of the steps which led to it were taken by him in person. Lady

Essex and the White Witch had resolved to poison Overbury long before he was committed to the Tower. When they had locked him fast, they fell to work, like artists knowing what they meant to do.

The first step was to change the Lieutenant; for Waad, though insolent and slavish, was not the man to put his neck into a coil of rope, by murdering one of his prisoners in open day. Who could assure him that his deed would never come to light? Murder will out; and when murder comes out, it is hard for any man to cheat the gallows of its due. Northampton had his agent ready; and when he sent for Waad to his mansion at Charing Cross, that agent was waiting in a room below. The Earl accused Waad of being too lenient with his new prisoner, and told him bluntly that he should not go back to his post. Waad was surprised; but on Northampton hinting that much of Lady Arabella's plate was missing, and that the Lieutenant was supposed to know what had become of it, he was so much frightened that he gave up his commission on the spot. He left Northampton House with fourteen hundred pounds in his pocket, and a promise of six hundred pounds more, if he would only hold his tongue. A ruined gambler, one Sir Gervase Helwyss, was then brought in. What passed between the proud peer and the obscure knight we shall never learn; but that very night, without a warrant, without an oath, this ruffian was installed as Lieutenant of the Tower. The note of his appointment was scrawled at Northampton House, and the record of it afterwards inserted in a blank corner of the Council book. All his instructions, as to the treatment of his prisoner, Helwyss received directly from the Lord Privy Seal.

The second step was to change the keeper; for in such a business they could not trust an ordinary fellow to do their will. In Ann Turner's house there lived a servant worthy of such a mistress; one Richard Weston, a tailor, with a soul too big for a yard and goose. Having tried his skill in sorcery and coining, he had run through a round of jails before adopting the more profitable trade of pimp. As Mrs. Turner's man he had been employed to carry notes from the Countess to Carr, to arrange their guilty pleasures in Paternoster Row, to watch over their secret meetings at the Brentford Farm. He knew his masters, and they knew their tool. A bag of gold would buy him, body and soul; and the Countess never paused to count the cost of what she had a mind to buy. She asked Sir Thomas Monson to get this fellow appointed keeper in the Bloody tower; but Monson, though eager to oblige so great a lady, thought it well to consult the Privy Seal—an act of prudence to which he afterwards owed his life. Northampton told him not only that Weston's appointment to wait on Overbury would be right, but that the King himself wished Weston to be placed in charge. Monson took him to the Tower and put him in the poet's room.

From that night Overbury's strength began to fail. Though his offence was only a contempt, he was confined more strictly than men who had been condemned to die. A secret order from Northampton closed up every avenue to the Bloody tower. Sir Nicholas, his father, and Lady Lydcot, his sister, were turned away from his door. Lydcot moved the court for leave to visit him, but he was only allowed to see him at his grated window. Davis, one of his men, proposed to be locked up with his master, day and night, and he was kicked away from the Tower. Sir Robert Killigrew, the physician, was clapped in the Fleet for trying to speak with him. Even Rochester's messages were stopped. Northampton was resolved that he should die, and he took pains that none save creatures of his own should enter into Overbury's cell. Yet the poet's strong stomach caused much delay; and letters got in and out, in spite of the Lieutenant's care. Monson told the Lieutenant that notes might pass under his eye in tarts and jellies, if he were not sharp; and when Simon Marson, the King's musician, brought to the Tower a present of jellies, which Lady Essex wished to be given to Overbury in the name of Carr, the Lieutenant, poking into them for correspondence, found that they were poisoned, and refused to let them pass. Weston sneered at such scruples; but Helwyss could not tell how far his employers wished him to go, and he had a strong desire to escape a murderer's doom.

On Tower Hill, in a small shop, lived one James Franklin, an apothecary, less honest in his trade than he who put poison into Romeo's hands. Like all the agents employed by Lady Essex, Franklin was a Papist; and this fellow, though he professed to keep a devil, and was said to have poisoned his wife, was brought to assist in committing murder, not only by the payment of a hundred and twenty pounds in gold, but by the hope of doing good service to his Church. From Franklin, Weston received a phial of stuff like water, which Mrs. Turner instructed him how to mix with his prisoner's drink. But Helwyss, still in doubt, detained the phial, and poured the drug upon the ground; even while he was suffering Weston to lay the tarts and jellies from Lady Essex on the prisoner's dish.

These poisons crept into the poet's veins. His cheek began to pale, and his voice to drop. On Overbury begging in his misery that a friend and a physician might come to see him, Rochester appeared in person before the Council, and procured a warrant for Lydcot and Killigrew to enter his cell; but when the favourite was gone away from the Council board, Northampton and Suffolk revoked their pass. The prisoner, they wrote to Helwyss, must be closely kept; and if he needed a physician, *they* would send one to him.

To draw his mind from thoughts of their foul play, Suffolk caused Overbury to be told that Rochester and he were on bad terms; and on Northampton's hints, he even went so far in this deceit as to ask for Overbury's good offices with Rochester, in return for his own in Overbury's favour with the King. Northampton took these messages to the Tower; and when the poet was thought to be off his guard, the French adventurer, Mayerne, rode down to the Bloody tower, and marked his prisoner with a poisoner's eye. Lobel, a French apothecary, and Reeve, his English boy, were appointed to do the deed.

The poet knew that he was being poisoned. Helwyss told him that Lord Rochester had sent him an emetic, as his lordship wished him to look sick, in order that the King's compassionate feelings might be touched. The poet was annoyed at such feeble tricks; and Northampton schooled his Lieutenant into exciting Overbury to use the language of reproach towards Rochester, while he himself pressed on the work of drugging him to death. When all was ready, Lobel made the glister which his apprentice Reeve applied.

The poet was no more.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE END.

CARR heard of the poet's death without a sigh. The courtiers who watched him closely saw, or afterwards thought they saw, a gleam of unusual brightness pass across his face when he heard the news. He flew to his enchantress, told her the story of his death, and sealed her rapture with a lover's kiss.

Northampton, fearing that men's tongues would wag against him in the city, requested Helwyss to send for Lydcot to the Tower, but to take care that the corpse should be buried before he came. The poet was put under ground before his flesh was cold.

The wedding-day was fixed, the feast of St. Stephen, 1613. Rochester was made an earl, so that Lady Essex would not have to descend from her former rank by marrying him. Sherborne Castle was torn from Raleigh to provide them with a country seat. Lady Raleigh put up her hands to heaven; and then the splendid nuptials of the Earl and Countess of Somerset were celebrated in the royal chapel at Whitehall, with a splendid ceremony, a round of dances, and a gorgeous masque.

Just eight years earlier, on the same day, in the same chapel, before the same king and queen, in presence of nearly all the same lords and ladies, with the same officiating bishop, the young lady, then a fair and innocent child, had been married to the young and handsome Earl of Essex. Two years after this second wedding that brilliant throng was scattered to the winds. The hero and heroine of the day, with their passions chilled, their spirits broken, their lives forfeited, were lying in the Tower; a bickering and unhappy pair; conscious of their fall; and eager to impute their ruin to each other's crimes. Lady Somerset now contemned her low-born husband; Lord Somerset now abhorred his wicked wife.

Northampton never got the White Staff for which he had done so much, for nature could not wait, and when the surgeons who were called to Northampton House had cut the putrid sore in his side, he fell at once. A priest, who waited in his chamber, gave him the host, laid pall and cross on his bed, and set tapers burning for him night and day. He died with yells of accusation ringing in his ears, which all his power as a Privy Councillor could not silence. Peers, burgesses, and citizens accused him of being not only a Papist and a pensioner of Spain, but the secret soul of all the Catholic plots. In vain he raved and stormed; in vain he threw himself at the favourite's feet; in vain he pointed out what he had done against Fawkes and Garnet. The mask was falling from his face, and men began to see him for what he was. He died in a gorgeous chamber of Northampton House (June 1614)—in time, but only just in time, to save himself from a cell in the Bloody tower.

For the poet in his grave had begun to make war on the peer in his palace. Friends of Overbury, who were also friends of virtue, had printed his poem, the Wife, and the public snapt up five editions of that noble satire in as many months. The reader of this poem talked of the poet, and then old tales were told once more about the manner of his death. An accident gave to these rumours a sudden, ominous shape; for Reeve, the French apothecary's lad, fell sick in Flanders. and in his agony of conscience spread the news of what his master had been hired to do. Trumball, the English Resident in Flanders, hastened home with this report, not daring to write such words as Reeve had spoken in his fear and pain. Winwood, the new Secretary of State, a Puritan, who hated the Howards with a good deal of secret energy, received Trumball's news with a grim delight, and sent him back to Flanders, with orders to keep an eye upon the lad.

Winwood moved with a wary step, for the boy's confession touched the fame of some of the highest persons in the realm. He dropt some hints that Helwyss was unfit for such a post as Lieutenant of the Tower, and when that officer, in trying to excuse himself, had half confessed his guilt, the Secretary of State rode down to Royston and laid his proofs before the King.

James read the confessions, and sent them on to Coke, by whom a swift and secret search was made for further facts. The injured Waad came forward; and his evidence touched, not only the more active agents in the crime, but Monson, Northampton, Lady Somerset and Carr. After he had arrested Mrs. Turner, her man Weston, and the apothecary Franklin, Coke applied for powers to examine Helwyss, Mayerne, and Sir Thomas Monson. The facts which came to light suggested that the murder of Overbury, daring and open as it was, had been no more than a single act in a great drama of public crime. Ann Turner spoke of Prince Henry as having been poisoned with a bunch of grapes; and Weston talked of wizards and druggists going over to Heidelberg, with orders to cut off Frederick and Elizabeth. Carr began to tremble; and thinking it might be well to cover his past life by a general pardon, he sent for Sir Robert Cotton to his room, and begged that antiquary to seek among his papers for the largest pardon ever granted by a sovereign prince. Cotton found a pardon issued by a Pope for the crimes of treason, murder, felony, and rape, and on the model of this grant the Earl of Somerset drew a pardon for himself, and got the document signed by James. But Ellesmere refused to pass it; saying, that to put the great Seal of England to such a paper would subject the Lord Chancellor to a premunire.

Coke was so far ready with his proofs, that the King was forced to appoint a commission of inquiry into the poet's death; Ellesmere, Lennox, Zouch and Coke, were the commissioners; and their meetings were held in the Lord Chancellor's residence, York House, to which they summoned Helwyss and Monson, as well as Weston, Franklin, and Mrs. Turner. Weston told them the story of his crime, the love affairs of Lady Essex and Carr, the secret meetings in Paternoster Row and at the Brentford Farm, the original prompting of Lady Essex to the murder, the promises given in her name by Mrs. Turner, the appointment made through Monson for him to wait in the Bloody tower, the failure of his philtres, the altercation with Helwyss, the receipt of the poisoned tarts and jellies, the impatience of Lady Essex to have the thing done, the visit of Mayerne, the employment of Lobel, and the glisters which caused the prisoner's death. Ere long, Mrs. Turner and Franklin confessed their guilt; the first giving up the implements of magic received by her from Forman,—the roll of devils, the scarf of white crosses, the bundle of waxen dolls, and the scrap of human skin; the second raving against his imp and his employer; one for not warning him in time, the other for bewitching him to his ruin, and then leaving him to perish.

The day of Lord and Lady Somerset was come. In raking up evidence against Mrs. Turner, the Commissioners found that on the day of her arrest Lady Somerset had not only sent her secret messages to fear nothing, but had got her husband to sign a warrant for John Poulton, a pursuivant, to search the Beaver Hat, a house near Temple Bar, and to bring away all the papers which he found there in a certain trunk and bag. The Beaver Hat was kept by Weston's son, and Poulton was accompanied in his seach by Lady Somerset's maid. The contents of these papers could be guessed, and when the Commissioners learned that Poulton had taken them to Somerset's house, they despatched their messenger with orders for the Earl to keep his lodging near the Cockpit, and for the Countess to remain either in her own house at Blackfriars, or with her elder sister, Lady Knollys, near the Tiltyard. Husband and wife were not to see each other. A messenger bore a letter to Royston, where the King was hunting, signed by Egerton, Lennox, Zouch, and Coke, urging that the proofs against Somerset were now so strong, that he ought to be stripped of the Seals and lodged for safety in the Tower.

James kissed his favourite and gave him up.

The tools of Lady Somerset were quickly put away. Helwyss was hanged in chains, and the gibbet on which he swung was left to stand for a warning on Tower Hill. Mrs. Turner was hung at Tyburn, in her yellow bands and powdered hair, in the presence of a mighty crowd, many of whom wept for the beautiful though faded creature, who knew the secret ways to all female hearts. She stood on the gallows, raving at the world she was about to leave, and calling down fire from heaven to consume it in the midst of sin and shame. Franklin and Weston were strung up like dogs.

How was justice to deal with the greatest criminal of all? Could a lady of the race of Howard be hung for a private murder?

Somerset had burnt the papers seized by Poulton at the Beaver Hat, but the confessions wrung from Weston, Franklin, Helwyss, and Mrs. Turner, would have sufficed to hang the principals, had such been the

King's desire. Taken from his lodgings near the Cockpit, Somerset was placed under charge of Sir Oliver St. John; and when the Privy Seal had been taken from him, he was carried with a single servant to the Tower. As he passed from Water Lane through the dark archway, Raleigh was coming out. "It is the case of Haman and Mordecai," said the great captive, then going out into freedom. James was told of this speech. "Raleigh," he observed, "may die in that deceit." The King was probably of Carr's opinion that the storm would soon whirl by.

Sir George More, the new Lieutenant, conducted the Earl and Countess of Somerset to the Bloody tower, and bade them enter. "Put me not in there," cried Lady Somerset, white with terror. She knew it was the room in which she had murdered her husband's friend. "I shall never sleep again," she shrieked; "his ghost will haunt my bed; put me elsewhere!" Somerset went in; and the Lieutenant urged her to follow him. In fact, he had no other lodging ready for prisoners of such high rank. But she would not stir. "Put me elsewhere! put me elsewhere!" she sobbed. Sir George had to carry her back to his own apartments, until Raleigh's house in the garden could be got ready for her use.

Somerset raged and pouted in his prison; bullying the new Lieutenant, Sir George More—sending for Lord Hay—demanding to see the King. When told that Sir George must write any message which he wished to be forwarded to James, he refused to send at all. When the Commissioners offered to hear him, he turned on his heel with a gesture of contempt.

At court the conflict of opposing forces raged with fury, for the Howards and their kinsfolk were a party in the state, with nearly half the public offices in their hands. Suffolk had got the Staff for which his uncle pined. Among them the Howards had the Mint, the Treasury, the Admiralty, the Army, the Household, the Cinque Ports, and the Channel Fleet; and as Lord Lieutenants they commanded the nine counties of Berks, Oxon, Cambridge, Norfolk, Suffolk, Surrey, Dorset, Herts, and Kent. Opposed to this great family were the Puritans and patriots of every shade; men so various in opinion and accomplishment as Pembroke and Bacon, Winwood and Raleigh, Villiers and Southampton. Clever as the courtiers were in guessing, they could not say which side would prove the stronger. Writing his Golden Age for a Christmas masque, Ben Jonson trimmed his verse to the uncertain winds; but nobler poets than Jonson spoke the indignant passions of the time. Ford, with fearless chivalry, composed a history of Overbury's Life and Death. He also wrote some verses on The Wife: as did a stronger and wiser pen than that of Ford. In the massive measure and volcanic heat of the lines by W. S. (prefixed to the seventh edition, and published in the exciting days between the arrest and trial), some critics see the last public service done by Shakspeare. It is certain that his patrons, Pembroke and Southampton, took a leading part in bringing the poet's murderers to account.

The King's heart melted towards his minion, but he dared not free him from the Tower until his innocence had been proved in an open court. The town was full of Overbury, and books of which he was the hero were on every stall in Cheape and Fleet Street. A ninth edition of The Wife appeared, and a companion poem called The Husband was brought out. Overbury was known to have been a Protestant, an enemy of Spain; so that patriotic passion entered deeply into the cry for justice on his murderers, and the King was borne upon a stream which he could neither stem nor turn.

When the Commissioners closed their labours, and fixed the day of Lady Somerset's trial (May 24, 1616), the arraignment was considered by the country as a national solemnity. All private business was suspended for a time. The shops were closed, the parks deserted. Every one who could afford to spend five double angels bought a seat in Westminster Hall; and the thousands who could not press inside the Hall choked up the avenues of Palace Yard, in order to catch the first news that the weak Earl and his bad Countess had been convicted of murder and condemned to die.

The Countess held up her hand, in answer to her name. A warder stood beside her with the axe. Attired in a gown of black tammel, a cypress chaperon, and a large lawn ruff, looking as penitent as she was beautiful, she bent her pale face to her judges, pleading guilty to her crime. Bacon, as the Attorney-general, spoke without harshness to the fallen Countess; Ellesmere, as Lord Chancellor, pronounced her sentence; and the warder, as executioner of the court, turned towards her the gleaming steel. She shed abundant tears, and begged the Lords to intercede for mercy with the King.

That night, Sir George More was alone with Somerset in his room. The prisoner was morose and threatening, though he knew that his wife had pleaded guilty and been condemned to die. He defied the judges and the peers. He said he would not answer to his name. More hinted that the King was anxious that he should confess his crime, accept a verdict, and trust his bounty for the rest. But Somerset would not yield. For six or seven days there had been much negotiation between the crown and the prisoner. Lord Hay had been chosen on the part of James. Sir George had been authorised to make Carr a specific promise, that on pleading guilty and evading proof, the life of Lady Somerset should be spared and his own honour as a peer should be saved. He rejected every offer. He said he would not plead. In look and tone, if not in words, he dared the court to bring him before his peers.

Late in the evening, More took horse for Greenwich, and after a midnight interview with the King rode back to the Tower.

Early in the May morning, More was at the door of Somerset's room. The Earl was already dressed—in black, as if in mourning for his wife. He wore a plain black satin suit, laid with two satin laces in a seam; a gown of velvet, lined with unshorn; the sleeves trimmed with lace, and the gloves adorned with satin tops. He had the George about his neck. His hair was neatly curled, and his beard fell richly on his chest. More noticed that his eyes were sunk in his head, and that his face was very pale.

A moment before he stood up in court, the Lieutenant whispered in his ear that if he said one word against the King he should be dragged down, sentenced in his absence, and immediately put to death. To show his prisoner that he meant what he was saying, he placed two strong fellows close to him, each with a cloak on his arm, with orders to watch his lips, and on a word being dropped about the King, to throw their cloaks over his face, pull him down, and hurry him away on the ground that he was mad.

Somerset denied the charge, and put his accusers to the proof. That part of the evidence which concerned Mayerne, Lobel, and his boy Reeve, had been suppressed; and the court could not prove his guilt unless that evidence were produced. Bacon was very skilful; but his proofs were vague and incomplete. The long May day wore out in speeches which divided and perplexed the public; and when the torchmen entered with their lights, the darkness in the street was not more evident than the darkness in the hall of justice. Ellesmere asked for a verdict, and broke his staff; but when Somerset went back to the Tower that night, no one could say that he was guilty of the murder, though every one knew that he had been condemned to die.

The Earl and Countess of Somerset came near together once again, but not as man and wife who love and trust each other. The doors of the Bloody tower and of the Garden house were left ajar, and they were sometimes overheard in angry talk. If Overbury's ghost could have visited them, either by day or night, the murdered man might have felt avenged by a misery so complete.

Their dream of state was gone; their hope of rest not come. The last years of their lives were to be spent in poverty, in loneliness, in mutual scorn. In time, on a pardon being vouchsafed them by the King, they left the Bloody tower and Garden house together; going away, men said, to live in some country place, in a small house which had been left to them. There they dwelt under a common roof for a good many years to come; living apart; nursing a blue-eyed girl, who had been born to them whilst they lay under the charge of murder; but otherwise groaning in a state of misery which was not untruly described as hell upon earth.

But out of evil comes, not seldom, by a higher law than men can fashion, a form of goodness to redeem it. Even as a lily feeds and grows out of dust and ashes, that blue-eyed girl, the child of so much sin, was to grow up in that secluded house, ignorant of her mother's shame, into one of the purest and proudest mothers in a land illustrious for her noble women. Lady Ann Carr was the only child of the guilty pair; and this daughter of a murderess lived to become the mother of that Lord William Russell, who was to lay his head upon the block in the very same cause for which Raleigh died.

END OF VOL. I.

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